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Thailand as an alternative to the Philippines bases problem : new wine in an old bottle.

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NAVAL POSTGRADUATE SCHOOL
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THAILAND AS AN ALTERNATIVE TO THE PHILIPPINE BASES PROBLEM: NEW WINE IN AN OLD BOTTLE

by

Edward Gene Redmon

June 1986

Thesis Advisor: Claude A. Buss

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Thailand as an Alternative to the Philippine Bases Problem: New Wine in an Old Bottle

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June 1986

ABSTRACT

This study analyzes Thailand's potential as a basing alternative, assuming the United States is forced to leave its key facilities in the Philippines. It stresses the US national interest to maintain a strong presence in Southeast Asia, and concludes that support of President Reagan's defense policies infers tacit approval of a Thai basing scenario. It traces the historic friendship of the US and Thailand, analyzes the Soviet/Vietnamese threat in the region and its positive affect on US-Thai relations.

The paper lists and compares Thai and Philippine base physical assets and missions, and concludes that- while the Subic/Clark complex can't be duplicated- Thai bases at Sattahip and Phuket could be used in forward basing scenarios to maintain the US presence in the region, and counter Soviet adventurism. If the US stresses the mutuality of security interests, the Thais will acquiesce to an American presence. Should the US leave the Philippines, Thailand is a militarily and politically viable alternate.

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ACKNOWLEDGMENT

To Professors Claude Buss and Stephen Jurika, who prove the best teachers are limited neither by age nor the confines of a classroom.

I. INTRODUCTION

Corazon Aquino became President of the Republic of the Philippines in February 1986 and promised a change from dictatorship to democracy. While Washington welcomes a return to democracy, having played an important role in the success of Aquino's "people power" rebellion, a primary American national interest in the Philippines is maintaining a strategic military presence at Clark Air Force Base and Subic Bay Naval Base.

The Philippine crisis is not over. As one noted Philippine expert stated, "When they stop dancing in the streets . . . they've got the same problems."[1] The Aquino government inherited a collapsed economy, a $30 billion debt, a corrupt bureaucracy, and an insurgent movement which is ideologically opposed to democracy.[2] Leftist spokesmen in the Philippines have already criticised Mrs. Aquino's, "bad positions--leaving the issue of the US military bases in the country for the future."[3]

The United States Congress is concerned over the long-term use of the Philippine bases. In the aftermath of the Philippine elections, several Congressmen renewed demands that the Pentagon look for alternative options. Senator Sasser, ranking Democrat on the Senate

Appropriations subcommittee on military construction told the press the current turmoil in the Philippines demands an insurance policy of other contingency plans. He said,

> We can't assume we'll be able to stay there forever . . . . The Pentagon says there is no alternative to those bases . . . but there's got to be an alternative if we're told to move out of them.[4]

Philippine instability is a concern to other American allies in Southeast Asia. The Christian Science Monitor reported on March 3, 1986,

> Some countries, particularly Thailand were also concerned about how the deteriorating situation in Manila would affect the United States' strategic presence in the region, given the key role played by the two US bases in the Philippines. Debate had even begun in Bangkok over whether Thailand should allow the US to revive its military bases on Thai soil if the Philippine facilities had to be abandoned. But, officially, the Thai government indicated it was not keen on the idea.[5]

That the Thai government was discussing the issue at all points to a mutuality of interests between Thailand and the United States. This paper addresses whether, if the United States is forced to leave its bases in the Philippines, we could use Thailand as an alternate. It examines Thailand's potential as an alternate to the Philippine bases from a political and military viewpoint, assuming the United States loses those bases.

A brief look at American national interests in Southeast Asia establishes the region's importance. That importance must be examined in relation to all of Asia. Southeast Asia links the economic power of Northeast Asia

and the strategic petroleum wealth of Southwest Asia, and is a growing economic power in its own right.

No examination of American interests in Southeast Asia can omit discussing the trauma of America's defeat in Vietnam and its effect on American public opinion. The next chapter will try to answer the question: Will the American people support a return of American troops to mainland Southeast Asia?

Next, the paper provides a brief historical background of US-Thai relations, tracing the developing friendship between the two nations, and analyzing their traditional patron-client relationship. Finally, it reviews the cooling relationship during the waning years of the Vietnam conflict.

Then the focus turns to the threat-- Soviet and Vietnamese aggression in the region. This section traces the Soviet involvement in Indochina and details the Soviet presence in Cam Ranh Bay and Danang. It recounts the Thai reaction to Soviet and Vietnamese aggression, and its effect on Thailand's relations with other regional actors. Finally, it indicates that Soviet presence and Vietnamese aggression in Indochina led to a convergence of US and Thai national interests.

Emphasis shifts to a comparison of the Philippine military facilities and those assets available in Thailand. The chapter lists the general missions performed by the

Clark/Subic complex; compares the physical assets in the Philippines and Thailand; evaluates Thailand's capabilities to perform the general missions; and identifies Sattahip and Phuket as possible alternatives.

Chapter VII addresses the politics of negotiations for US bases in Thailand by stressing that US bases serve the mutual interests of both countries. It shows that US basing is a logical progression of security linkages between the two countries; anticipates possible Thai reaction to US basing initiatives; examines the benefits to Thailand of a bases agreement; and predicts the reaction of other regional actors to a US presence in Thailand.

The paper concludes by predicting the viability of Thailand as an alternate to the Philippine bases.

Chapter I Endnotes

[1]Calvin Denmon quoting Stephen Jurika in "Scramble for Power Predicted", Monterey Peninsula Herald, February 28, 1986.

[2]From excerpts taken from a lecture given by Dr. Claude Buss reported in "Observer Talks About Philippines Election", Monterey Peninsula Herald, March 6, 1986.

[3]Sacerdot, Guy, "The Left Sees Long Term Gain", Far Eastern Economic Review, 27 February 1986, p.16.

[4]See George C. Wilson's, "US Military Readiness Boosted in Phillipines" Washington Post, February 25, 1986. Similar views were also expressed by Senate majority leader Robert Dole on February 15, 1986 in an article titled, "Relocating U.S. Bases Proposed," Monterey Peninsula Herald, p.4. Senator Dole told reporters at a Republican fund-raising luncheon that he planned to introduce legislation regarding the possible relocation of the two bases in the Philippines. He said, "I think there are some possibilities" for other locations....We might not find any [other nations willing to host a military base.]" It is certainly beyond the scope of this paper to speculate whether Senator Dole's comments were simply a means of applying pressure to a crumbling Marcos' regime or a serious decision to seek alternatives.

[5]As reported by Geoffrey Murray in "Philippines' Partners in ASEAN relieved over Marcos-to-Aquino Transition", The Christian Science Monitor, March 3, 1986, p.17.

II. AMERICAN INTERESTS IN SOUTHEAST ASIA

The American press uses "vital," "key," and "strategic" to describe our bases in the Philippines. The same terms could describe bases in Thailand. This chapter examines the economic importance of the ASEAN nations; shows the linkages of Southeast Asia to the rest of Asia; and stresses the critical importance of Asia to American national interests.[1]

It is important to note Thailand's relationship to the Association of Southeast Asian Nations (ASEAN), and ASEAN's importance to the area. ASEAN is nearly synonomous with Southeast Asia, excluding Burma and Vietnamese Indochina. ASEAN was founded in 1967 by Thailand, Malaysia, Singapore, Indonesia, and the Philippines, and joined by Brunei in 1984.

It began as an organization to foster economic cooperation. In 1971, with the Kuala Lumpur Declaration, ASEAN proposed the neutralization of Southeast Asia by establishing a Zone of Peace, Freedom, and Neutrality (ZOPFAN). The ZOPFAN concept was "the first collective, indigenous attempt at coping with the impending withdrawal of American military power from South-East Asia."[2]

Since 1979, when it condemned the Vietnamese invasion of Kampuchea, ASEAN has assumed a respected political voice

in the world forum. Lately, ASEAN has begun to cooperate on some regional military issues, but it is not a collective security organization.

Thailand is a member of ASEAN, but will be examined independently. Thus, a reference to "ASEAN's reaction" or "Thai relations to ASEAN" alludes to a sovereign Thailand relating to the other nations of Southeast Asia.

The protection of ASEAN is in the American national interest for its economic strength, as a source of raw materials, and its strategic location linking Northeast Asia to the Persian Gulf, Africa, and Western Europe. Viewed as a political entity, ASEAN has a population greater than that of the United States and a current GNP of over $225 billion.[3]

Zagoria and Simon give a clear overview of our reasons for defending ASEAN:

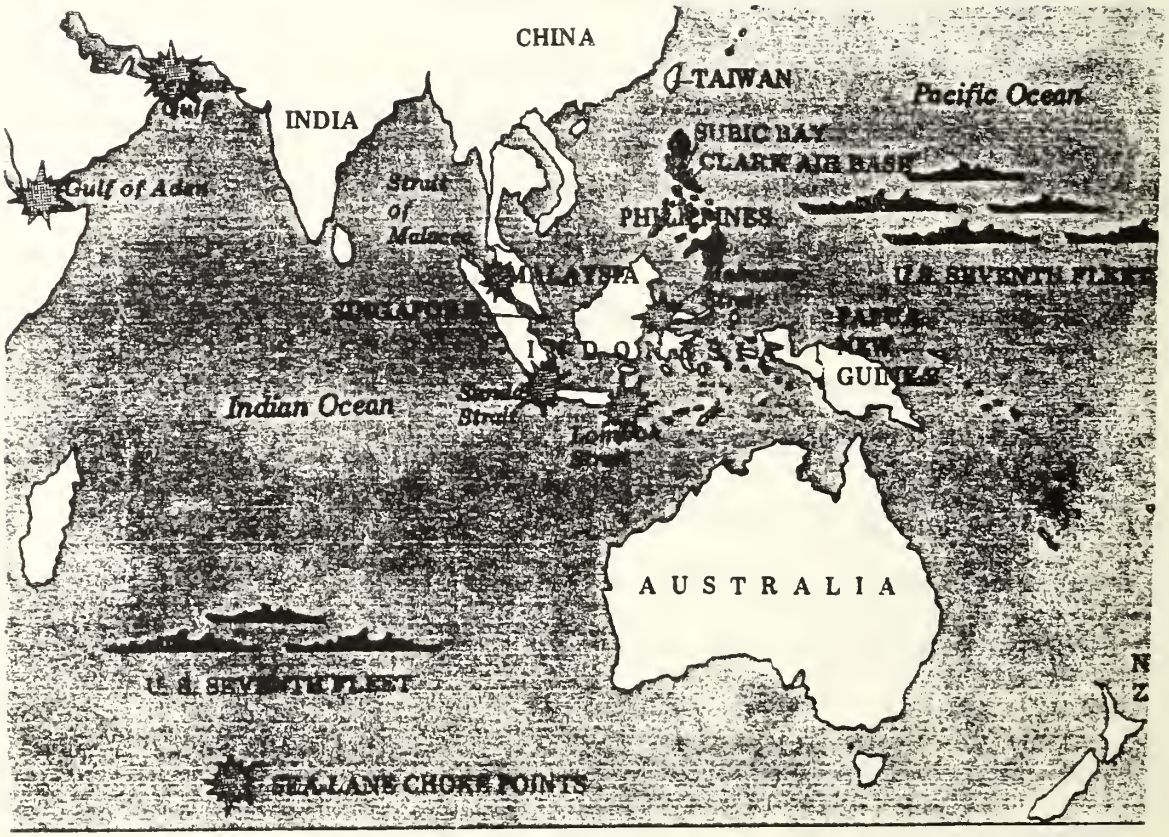
> ASEAN is a counter to a Russian-backed expansionist Vietnam; it is an important trading partner for the United States, Japan, and other members of the developing Pacific community; it is a moderate and generally friendly grouping within the more radical Third World; its strategic waterways control the access from the Pacific to the Indian Ocean; it will be, according to at least one authoritative estimate, the most rapidly growing region of the world in the 1980s.[4]

The American interest in Southeast Asia is overwhelmingly economic. American trade with ASEAN is rapidly increasing, exceeding $25 billion in 1983. US investments in ASEAN are now almost $8 billion.[5] From 1979-1981, American exports to ASEAN increased by about 30

percent and from 1977-1982, total two-way trade more than doubled. ASEAN is now America's fifth largest trading partner.[6] United States trade with Asia in 1984 was $174 billion, a 27 percent rise over a 1983 trade of $137 billion. Asia-Pacific commerce represents 32 percent of all American trade making Asia our largest trading partner. Asian trade has outpaced US-European trade for the past 13 years. Our economic stakes in ASEAN and the Pacific community are very large.[7]

The ASEAN nations are rich in many of the world's strategic raw materials and minerals. They produce rubber, tin, titanium, chromium, and platinum. The US has a net import reliance of over 50 percent on several minerals found in the Asia-Pacific region: antimony from the PRC; bauxite, cadmium, rutile, flourite, and zinc from Australia; chromium from the Philippines; tantalum from Malaysia and Thailand; tin from Malaysia, Thailand and Indonesia; and tungsten from Thailand and the PRC. This list of materials suggests, "implications for naval power and sea control to preserve seaborne traffic in peace and war are clear."[8] ASEAN is also a key source of oil for East Asia. Indonesia is the world's ninth largest petroleum producer, and Brunei and Malaysia are also oil exporters. Southeast Asia mineral exports total $33 billion each year.[9]

Perhaps even more important than its resources or economic strength is ASEAN's strategic location linking Northeast Asia and the Southwest Pacific region. ASEAN sits astride the key straits of Makassar, Lombok, Sunda, and Malacca. (see Figure 1) These straits are the key links between the economies of East Asian nations and the Persian Gulf oil that fuels those economies. About 60-65 percent of the petroleum used by Northeast Asia flows through the Indian Ocean and the ASEAN straits. Each month, over 4000



Source: S. Bilveer, "U.S. Military Bases in the Philippines," Asian Defence Journal, January 1986, p. 22.

Figure 1- The Key ASEAN Straits

merchant ships pass through the Strait of Malacca, linking Asian commerce to the Southwest Pacific, Africa, and Europe.[10] These shipping lines must be protected in peacetime and war, since, "Short of war, the interruption of Western trade patterns could result in widespread unemployment in the industrialized countries whose economies are intimately linked to one another."[11]

Viewing the world in US perspective, current policy places Southeast Asia behind its concerns in Europe, Japan, and the Persian Gulf. But the ASEAN area is the critical linkage between these regions. The primary US defense interest in the region is ensuring secure sea lines of communication through the Pacific. Secretary of Defense Weinberger stated, ". . . the security of the United States has become increasingly interdependent with the security of each of its Pacific allies."[12]

Protection of ASEAN, as part of Asia, is in the US national interest. President Reagan called the Pacific Basin, the "key to future US interests." His advisors state that Washington wants to shift its diplomatic focus from Europe to the Pacific rim because of strategic considerations.[13]

ASEAN's importance derives from its own economic strength and links to the other economies of the Pacific

security concerns. Our security and defense actions closely followed economic activity. The 19th Century "Open Door" foreign policy in China equated to a desire for equal opportunities vis a vis other Western powers. History proves that US economic concerns determine our future strategic interests.

> The economic motive of American foreign policy is very significant . . . As the economic dynamism of the Asia-Pacific region expands in leaps and bounds, the concept of security will assume a larger economic dimension propelling active US involvement in South-East Asia in the decades ahead. US conceptions of regional security will be informed more by ASEAN as an attractive economic proposition rather than for its purely strategic attributes.[14]

Southeast Asia's importance is increasing. It is in the American national interest to continue our military presence in the region. If that presence can't be maintained in the Philippines, it must be located elsewhere in Southeast Asia. Thailand is the only other country in the region with long and close historic ties of friendship. That is why it is the focus of this paper.

Chapter II Endnotes

[1]Much has been published which tries to describe exactly what constitutes the American national interest. Some books and articles attempt to quantify the national interest. Several key books or articles were reviewed for guidelines. They are: Friedrich, Carl, J., ed., The Public Interest, New York, Atherton Press, 1962; "The Quest for an Operational Definition of the National Interest", an anonymous, unpublished article; Gabriel, Ralph H., The Course of American Democratic Thought, New York, Roland Press,1956; Schubert, Glendon, The Public Interest, Glencoe, Ill., The Press, 1960; Parrington, Samuel, The Romantic Revolution: Major Currents in American Thought, New York, Harcourt, Brace, and Co., 1930. But without doubt, the best book for use in defining values for American national security interests is Donald E. Nuechterlein's, National Interests and Presidential Leadership: The Setting of Priorities, Westview Press, Boulder, 1978.

[2]This quote is taken from a footnote in K.S. Nathan's article, "US-Thai Relations and ASEAN Security, Australian Outlook, Vol. 39, No. 2, August 1985, p. 103.

[3]These statistics were taken from two excellent articles on the topic with slightly opposing viewpoints. Richard K. Betts argues that Southeast Asia, while rapidly developing economically is very low on Washington's priority list. His article was, "Southeast Asia and U.S. Global Strategy: Continuing Interests and Shifting Priorities," in Orbis, Vol. 29, No. 2, Summer, 1985, pp. 351-384. For a security oriented article see former CINCPAC (now Chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff) Admiral William J. Crowe's position in "The US cannot, and should not, go it alone", Pacific Defence Reporter, August 1985, pp. 11-15.

[4]See the chapter written by Donald S. Zagoria and Sheldon W. Simon, "Soviet Policy in Southeast Asia," in Donald S. Zagoria, ed., Soviet Policy in East Asia, Yale University Press, New Haven, 1982, pp. 153-173.

[5]See Crowe, "US cannot go it alone", p.12.

[6]See Betts, "Southeast Asia", p. 359 quoting from a US Department of State Bulletin, October 1982, p. 33.

[7]For an excellent account of the threats to America's Pacific and Indian Ocean naval strategy and the importance of the strategic sea lines of communication see Dora Alves', "A strategy for the Indian and Pacific Oceans," in Pacific Defence Reporter, October 1983, pp. 11-16. The statistics on strategic minerals, and the quote were reported by Alves on pp. 11-12, referencing the US Bureau of Mines.

[8]The statistics cited are a composite from several articles. Two have already been noted: Betts, "Southeast Asia", p.359; and Crowe, "US cannot go it alone", p.11. Two other articles were referenced. See also F. A. Mediansky's "The Superpowers," Asian Defence Journal, January 1985, p.12, and Ltc Donald Brown, "Don't Give Up On the Philippines," St. Louis Post- Dispatch, February 13, 1986.

[9]These statistics are from Crowe, "US cannot go it alone", p.11.

[10]See Alves, "A strategy for the Indian Ocean", p.12.

[11]Admiral Crowe provides this information in two articles. The first is his previouly cited work, Crowe, "US cannot go it alone", p.11. More data comes from the text of a speech given by Admiral Crowe before the World Affairs Council on October 13, 1983, "Pacific Perspectives", World Affairs Journal, Los Angeles World Affairs Council, Spring 1984, Vol.III, No. 2, p.4.

[12]Secretary Weinberger was quoted in John Dorrance's article, "Coping with the Soviet Threat," Pacific Defence Reporter, July 1983, p.22. Dorrance cites a speech by Weinberger made before the National Press Club, Canberra, Australia, November 5, 1982.

[13]Reported by Wang Baoqin in, "Has the strategic focus shifted from Europe to Asia?", Pacific Defence Reporter, March 1985, p.24. He concludes that even though President Reagan stated this during his April visit to China, the US has not shifted its ties to Asia. He concludes, " . . . although Washington has close ties with Asia, it will emphasize the importance of the Atlantic alliance to US politics and security over the long run." Still, the economic argument for Asia first will only increase in the 1990s.

III OVERCOMING THE TRAUMA OF VIETNAM

The United States' experience in Vietnam left a significant mark on the American psyche. Admiral Crowe remarked, "Following the fall of Vietnam, I ventured the opinion that we would need at least a quarter of a century to rebuild confidences shaken by that conflict."[1] Before defense planners could commit to relocating the Philippine facilities in Thailand, they must seriously consider American public opinion about the return of American troops to mainland Southeast Asia. Ultimately governmental legitimacy for such a plan springs from American "grassroots" support. This chapter will show America has overcome the "Vietnam trauma." Admittedly, predicting American public opinion is difficult; such analysis is conjecture, but it must be done.

Four points will be considered in showing public support for a Thai rebasing concept. Most importantly, deployment of sailors and airmen to Thai bases is not the same as committing American soldiers or advisors to combat operations. Next, American support for a presence in Southeast Asia can be assumed to be strong, recently demonstrated by concern over the Philippine election crisis. Relocating the bases is not just a repackaging of

"containment." World events have shifted US public opinion into support for Reagan's rearming of America. American military action does not carry the stigma of Vietnam. Finally, the United States has a long-standing treaty commitment to defend Thailand. If forced to honor this agreement, comparison of South Vietnam in the 60s with Thailand in the 80s shows the Thai calculus to be very different.

Probably the strongest argument for a return to Thailand is that basing troops on foreign soil is not the same as sending young men into combat. Traditionally, using airmen and sailors for power projection does not have the same affect on the American mind as sending infantrymen into land battle. Since Vietnam, the American public, through Congress, has given tacit support for several military operations.

During American naval maneuvers in the Gulf of Sidra, off the Libyan coast, in 1981 two Libyan fighters were shot down by US Navy carrier-based F-14s. Public response was favorable. The same military "exercises" were conducted in February and March 1986.[2] On April 14, 1986, US forces launched a massive airstrike against Libya, with the loss of one F-111 and two crewmembers.

During armed reconnaissance flights over Lebanon in December 1983, two US aircraft were shot down, one pilot was rescued, one killed, and one captured (later to be

freed by the Syrians in a subsequent, much publicized release). In the same context, the battleship USS New Jersey delivered repeated artillery barrages into Lebanon, without arousing significant outcry from the American public.[3] Since 1980, US AWACS airplanes and KC-135 refueling tankers have flown daily reconnaissance missions to monitor the Iraq-Iran war for the Saudi Arabian government, and public opinion remains favorable to such an operation.

Clearly, the American public perceives a difference between open combat and an air force or naval presence. Hence, American public opinion could be expected to support rebasing regardless of the mainland Southeast Asian location.

The American national interest in Southeast Asia has been examined. The extent to which the American public believes in those interests will determine support for a move into Thailand should US forces withdraw from the Philippines. The Philippine election crisis commanded great media attention, and most articles or broadcasts addressed the concern over viability of the US bases. While most Americans don't know why a Southeast Asia presence is vital, they know the bases are important. Public support for American intervention in Philippine election politics, and Congressional approval of a $900

million aid package to the Philippines, infer support of an American presence in Southeast Asia.[4]

The Cold War principle of containment is ambiguous, but Americans understand trade statistics and the need for raw materials. Since the first oil embargo in 1973, few Americans argue about protection of sea lanes which secure access to petroleum. American concern for our continued military position in the Philippines infers support for an American presence in Thailand, should Clark and Subic become untenable.

General support for the Reagan administration's massive rearmament program also demonstrates a public shift away from the Vietnam trauma. Since Vietnam, several events have shocked the public out of its anti-military mood: the Soviet invasion of Afghanistan in 1979; the Iranian hostage crisis in 1980; the atrocities of Kampuchea's communist led Pol Pot regime; the Vietnamese invasion of Kampuchea; and the successful American "liberation" of Grenada.[5] President Reagan's landslide election of 1980 and relection in 1984 have been interpreted as a mandate for conservative opinion.

> Reagan was swept into office on a ticket of "tough big stick" diplomacy: this was followed by the passage of the biggest peacetime military budget by the US Congress. The military intervention in Grenada was a reflection of the "hawkish mood" of the Reagan administration. That Reagan won his reelection in 1984 resoundlingly was a testimony of the American public's approval and endorsement of the Administration's foreign and defence policies.[6]

American concern with Southeast Asia has been the focus of several popular movies; "Rambo" and "Uncommon Valor" both address the POW/MIA issue. "The Killing Fields" portrays the plight of the Kampuchean peoples under Pol Pot.

> Amid a growing mood of frustration and anger caused by terrorist attacks on the US, extensive Soviet spying on the country, and what is seen as Soviet expansionism, the US House of Representatives has overwhelmingly voted for support to anti-communist rebels around the world, including US$5 million aid for those in Cambodia . . . . This is the first time since the end of the Indochina war in 1975 that congress has voted for overt assistance to anti-communist groups fighting Hanoi even indirectly . . . . An interesting pointer to the prevailing mood of machismo on Capitol Hill was the frequent reference made by lawmakers to the screen character Rambo . . . .[7]

Douglas Pike notes a change in American public opinion toward Vietnam and Indochina, "Antiwar activists, once monolithically dedicated to embracing Hanoi, split down the middle after the war, over the human-rights issue in Vietnam . . . and over the holocaust . . . in Kampuchea."[8] The overwhelming support for the 1983 invasion of Grenada, and the April 1986 raid on Libya, prove the American public will again support the use of force, including the loss of American lives to protect American interests.

A final point supporting US presence in Thailand is that any comparison between Thailand in the 80s and Vietnam of the 60s is misleading. The United States is bound by treaty to aid Thailand against foreign aggression.[9] An American base in Thailand would not affect our treaty

commitment, except to decrease response time. If the United States was forced to honor its commitment to Thailand, several differences between Thailand and Vietnam are apparent.

First, Thailand and the United States have a long history of friendship and cooperation, unlike the US experience with Vietnam. Next, South Vietnam had no separate identity as an autonomous state before its independence, while Thailand has a proud heritage of several centuries of sovereign monarchy. Finally, the Thais, as a group, would support a war against communism. In short, "Thailand represents a better bet as a defensible nation and far less of a domino than Saigon."[10]

Judging American reaction to reestablishing bases in Thailand is difficult. However, there are several reasons to assume the United States is over the trauma of Vietnam. Four key points can be made for potential American support for Thai bases:

- An American naval or air facility in Thailand is not a commitment of soldiers to combat;

- American concern over the Philippine crisis implies tacit support for an American presence in Southeast Asia; if not Clark and Subic, then perhaps Thailand;

- The late 1970s saw a return to conservative values in America. Public support for Reagan's defense policy is evidence that the "Vietnam trauma" is over;

- Involvement in Thailand is not a repackaging of the communist containment theory used during Vietnam.[10]

The "Vietnam trauma" is over. While Southeast Asia may not occupy a high place in the American value system, criticism of possible American involvement in Thailand is far more likely to revolve around budgetary issues than security commitment.[11]

Chapter III Endnotes

[1]See Crowe, "The US cannot go it alone", p. 11. Admiral Crowe also expressed a similar view in his speech before the Los Angeles World Affairs Council see Crowe, "Pacific Perspectives," p. 2.

[2]Chronology of these events is from The World Almanac and Book of Facts 1985, Newspaper Enterprise Association, Inc., New York, 1984, p. 559.

[3]The World Almanac and Book of Facts 1985, p. 895-897.

[4] Although nearly every media story included this dollar amount, the best source is, U.S., Congress, House, Committee on Foreign Affairs, United States-Philippine Relations and the New Base and Aid Agreement. Hearings before a subcommittee of the House Committee on Foreign Affairs. 98th Cong., 1st seee., 1983, pp. 28, 29.

[5]The World Almanac and Book of Facts 1985, p. 514, 515, 550.

[6]See S. Bilveer's article, "U.S. Military Bases in the Philippines," in Asian Defense Journal, January 1986, pp.22-23. Bilveer points to the Iranian hostage crisis and Soviet worldwide adventurism as causes for the swing toward militarism. For another interesting study of the Presidential election and its implications see Theodore White's book, America in Search of Itself: The Making of the President 1956-1980, Harper and Rowe Publishers, New York, 1982. White addresses the return of conservative ideals. He quotes former President Carter as saying the Iranian hostage crisis was one of the key reasons he was not reelected. (p. 417)

[7]Nayan Chanda from, "Congress goes 'Rambo'", in Far Eastern Economic Review, 25 July 1985, p. 20.

[8]See Douglas Pike's article on the normalization of US-Vietnamese relations, "American-Vietnamese Relations", a paper prepared for the Tenth National Security Affairs Conference October 7-8, 1983, published in the monograph, edited by William A. Buckingham Jr., Defense Planning for the 1990s and the Changing International Environment, National Defense University Press, Washington D.C., 1984, pp. 37-54.

[9] See the Appendix. Under the 1954 Manila Pact, which formed SEATO the US pledged to aid Thailand in accordance with its constitutional processes. Copy of the SEATO Treaty was published in Collective Defence of Southeast Asia, by the Royal Institute of International Affairs, Oxford University Press, 1956, p.169. The Rusk-Thanat Agreement reaffirmed this agreement in 1962.

[10] This view of American reinvolvement in Southeast Asia is presented in Ean Higgins' working paper no. 53 for the Strategic and Defense Studies Centre, Options and Constraints For U.S. Far Eastern Policy: Five Issue Areas, The Australian National University Press, Canberra, June 1982.

[11] The budget issue is significant. It will be the key to any debate about future American security interests. Current Congressional debate over aid to the Nicaraguan rebels (March 1986) makes budgetary issues a major concern. The budget issue merits a study of its own, and is beyond the scope of this paper.

IV. HISTORY OF US-THAI RELATIONS 1830-1976

This chapter examines Thai-American relations in three periods: the 1800s to 1932; 1932 through 1945; and 1945 through 1976; and relates the historical patterns of interaction to current relations between the two nations.

The first period reflects an emphasis on trade, shows the great influence of American missionaries and advisors on Thai leaders, and describes the Thai efforts to become a modern sovereign state. The second period encompasses Thailand's overthrow of the absolute monarchy, the break in Thai relations with the United States during World War II, and the immediate post-war rapprochement between the two countries. The final period examines the US and Thailand client-patron relationship established by the Cold War and the Vietnam conflict, and the reasons for removal of the majority of American troops from Thailand in 1976. (Thailand officially changed its name from Siam in 1939, so is referred to as Siam for dates prior to 1939.)

A. THE BEGINNNINGS 1830 TO 1932

The roots of American-Thai relations follow a pattern typical of Western involvement in East and Southeast Asia. Seafaring traders come in search of wealth, then missionaries bent on converting the heathen, and finally

diplomats pursuing the treaties necessary to protect the interests of the traders and missionaries.

In 1832, President Andrew Jackson sent an intrepid sea captain, Edmund Roberts, as special envoy to draw up commercial treaties with Cochin China, Muscat, Japan, and Siam.[1] The 1833 Roberts treaty with Siam, the first American treaty with any Asian nation, freed American merchants of several annoying trade restrictions, guaranteed religious tolerance, and established the first ties between the US and Thailand.[2] Trade quickly expanded between the two countries, and the increased contact naturally led to missionary activity.

If the missionaries came to spread the message of Christianity, they certainly didn't limit themselves to preaching. To their credit, American missonaries had a great influence on Thai health, education, and political systems. The Rev. Dan Bradley was one of the first missionaries to work for progress in Siam. In 1835, he opened the first medical dispensary in Bangkok; in 1844, he began to publish the Bangkok Calendar, Siam's first newspaper; and in 1848, he helped establish the first primary school, the initial attempt at an educational system.

Missionaries provided the most important channel of US influence through their contact with Siam's royal family. King Mongkut relied on American missionaries for knowledge

of Western culture and behavior. This practice led to the use of American advisors to the Siamese court in later years.[3]

Through the 1840s and 1850s trade between the two countries increased. During the reign of King Mongkut, Siam conducted more trade with the US than with any other nation. In an effort to establish some consistency in trade patterns with Siam, Townsend Harris negotiated a treaty with Siam in 1856, which estabished permanent diplomatic relations, and gave the Americans extraterritoriality, fixed tariffs, and freedom of religion.[4]

During this period, the first patterns of a patron-client relationship began to develop between Siam and the United States. During the American Civil War Mongkut wrote President Lincoln offering war elephants to help the Union cause.[5] In turn, Mongkut relied on American advisors and technology to modernize his country, develop self-reliance, and maintain Siamese independence and sovereignty. The Thai found the Americans, " . . . had no desire for territory in Southeast Asia [and] . . . were generally more altruistic and humanitarian than the Europeans."[6]

During this period, Siam began to use American power as a counterweight against the Europeans.

> Kings Mongkut and Chulalongkorn were accomplished artists in this Thai style of diplomacy, balancing imperial interests of the French and English against each other and using their American (or Russian!) friends as protectors whenever either of the two European powers became too threatening.[7]

Although diplomatic contact and trade fell off during the American Civil War, US-Siamese relations were enhanced during the remainder of the 1800s by an exchange of visits between the two countries. In 1903, the Siamese began using an American Harvard law school graduate as an advisor to the Thai Minister of Foreign Affairs, a practice which continued until 1940. Russell Fifield states, "Their influence at times was considerable on the foreign policy of the kingdom and noticeable in affecting American attitudes toward the Thai."[8] Again the Thais used American patronage to oppose territorial encroachment by the British and the French.

World War I had an impact on the political fabric of Siam. Perhaps at the encouragement of their American advisors, the Siamese joined WWI on the allied side. At the Paris Peace Conference, Siam, like other Asian states, matured in the eyes of the West. Shortly after Paris in 1918, Siam joined the League of Nations, as the only Southeast Asian nation on the council.

In the postwar era, America influence caused subtle but important changes on Siam. Frances B. Sayre, son-in-law of President Wilson, became advisor to the Thai ministry and

pressed immediately for remission of the unequal treaties. He successfully argued his case in the United States, which abolished the treaty in 1927. From 1919-1929, the Rockefeller Foundation was active in Siam initiating public health programs, funding the studies of Thai students in America, and founding Chulalongkorn University in Bangkok.

American influence didn't change the structure of the absolute monarchy but did make Thai monarchs more benevolent. In 1932, King Prajadhipok visited the United States, and while talking to visiting Thai students, he allowed them to shake his hand, the first time a Thai subject had been allowed to touch the monarch. The king and returning students brought Thailand the concepts of democracy, equality, and nationalism. Thai society began to consider governmental reform and a sovereign Siam, free of Western domination.[9] Although there were two unsuccessful coups in 1912 and 1917, the monarchy remained absolute until June 24, 1932, when a group led by Pridi Phanomyong overthrew the king.

During the century from 1830 to 1930, the United States formed a cordial, if sometimes distant, relationship with Siam. American opinion supported underdog Siam against the colonial powers. "The Thai early recognized this sympathetic attitude and to promote their national interest they often sought close relations."[10] The Thai repeatedly demonstrated diplomatic statecraft which promoted

independence, self-reliance, and the use of American patronage as a protection against external aggression. During the next thirteen years, from 1932 to 1945, Thai-US relations would suffer two complete reversals.

B. DISILLUSION, WAR, RAPPROCHEMENT 1932-1945

From 1932 to 1945, Thai-American relations gradually deteriorated from friendship to war, only to find immediate postwar rapprochement. Both countries' foreign policies served their respective national interests. However, a unique feature of the relationship was that the friendship of the two peoples remained strong, while their governments were at war.

The series of coup groups which succeeded the absolute monarchy in Thailand were nationalistic and decidedly anti-foreign. Since America was the primary foreign influence, the Thai government became indifferent toward the United States. Lt. Col. Phibun Songhram (in power from 1938 to 1944) led a government dominated by conservative military officers, and his foreign policy orientation favored other military-led governments. His philosophy stood in stark contrast to American democracy, and Thai-American relations were further estranged.

> Phibun and his aides were also influenced by the emerging military dictatorships in other parts of the world, especially Japan. To them, totalitarian nations appeared virile and strong whereas the Western democracies seemed docile and weak.[11]

In 1940, Bangkok perceived the impotence of American power against Japanese regional aggression, and pushed desperately for neutral status. The Thais thus established a foreign policy pattern of seeking neutrality when they doubted the commitment of their American patron. On June 12, 1940, Thailand signed treaties of nonaggression with France and Great Britain, while simultaneously concluding a treaty of general friendship with Japan. In July 1941, President Roosevelt, without Bangkok's knowledge, suggested the neutralization of Thailand to the Japanese, who evaded his proposal.[12] On December 8, 1941 Japan occupied Thailand forcing the Phibun government to sign a military alliance. Once again, Thailand displayed its diplomatic flexibility.

> The failure of the British and the Americans to provide military assistance and the overwhelming power of the Japanese armies convinced Phibun and his aides that they had taken the only realistic course of action.[13]

On January 25, 1942, the Thai government declared war on Great Britain and the United States, in a move to further placate the Japanese and gain maximum autonomy for Phibun's regime under Japanese occupation. At this low point of US-Thai relations, the Thai diplomatic mission in the United States, " . . . opened one of the most important contacts ever made between the two countries."[14]

When Phibun's declaration of war was received in Washington, the Thai ambassador, Seni Pramoj announced that

his legation was independent of Phibun's government. Pramoj personally informed Roosevelt that the declaration did not represent the will of the Thai people and requested American assistance to liberate his country. During the remainder of 1941 and 1942 a contingent of Free Thai volunteers trained in America under the direction of Dr. Kenneth Landon of the State Department and Colonel Preston Goodfellow of the O.S.S.

In the summer of 1943, this trained cadre of resistance fighters was sent to Southern China, where they joined forces with an indigenous Thai underground movement led by Pridi Phanomyong.[15] Phibun's government was aware of Pridi's underground but neither supported nor opposed it. Phibun's regime still continued outward allegiance to Japan yet, "Under this thin veneer of cordiality, however, the Thai gave little cooperation to Japan's war effort."[16]

On July 25, 1944 the Phibun government toppled. By the end of World War II, Pridi had formed his own government. He quickly proclaimed that the declaration of war on the allies was illegal since it had never been constitutionally ratified or signed by the regency. In a very shrewd diplomatic move, Pridi appointed Seni Pramoj, a man immensely popular in the United States, Premier. Secretary of State Byrnes claimed that the US viewed Thailand, " . . . not as an enemy but as a country to be liberated."[17] Once again, the Thais demonstrated an

exceptional diplomatic flexibility to preserve their independence and serve their national interests.

In the immediate postwar environment Britain and France pressed for punitive action against Thailand, while the United States opposed negative sanctions. The Thai government quietly allowed its American patron to plead its case. Thailand's postwar reparations amounted to little more than repudiation of territory seized from the British and French and a levy of 1.5 million tons of rice to Britain.

By January 1946 the United States resumed full diplomatic relations with Thailand, and attained full allied support for its entry into the United Nations, ending a unique chapter in US-Thai relations.[18] The diplomatic spectrum had run from indifference, to war, to rapprochement. Thailand had alternately played Japan and the United States against each other to emerge postwar as a fully independent nation, virtually untouched by the ravages of World War II. Thailand faced the Cold War with an American patron.

C. COLD WAR TO NIXON DOCTRINE 1945-1976

The relations between the United States and Thailand in the two decades following World War II were characterized by growing US economic and military aid to Thailand, US support for a myriad of Thai governments and, with a few

exceptions, a harmony of national interests. The post-Vietnam cooling of relations must be viewed in the context of diverging national interests.

After the postwar settlements between Thailand and the allies, the United States concerned itself with the reconstruction of Europe. While Thailand struggled unsuccessfully to establish a representative government, Washington's policy toward Bangkok, " . . . became less interested in assisting the evolution of constitutional democracy and more concerned with opposing the spread of communism."[19]

The communist threat served both countries' national interests. Thailand gained vast amounts of military and economic aid, amounting to more than $138 million by 1957; and the US gained a staunch ally in Southeast Asia. In July 1950, the Thais sent 4000 troops and 40,000 metric tons of rice to Korea to aid the United Nations' war effort. This token show of Thai support was a shrewd diplomatic move by the Phibun government. It gave the U.S. a propaganda counter to Communist charges that the Korean conflict was an example of "Western Imperialism"; and Phibun's authoritarian regime gained popular legitimacy because of its increased ties with American democracy.[20]

The 1954 SEATO agreement was another example of common interest. The US containment policy gained legitimacy in Asia through Thailand's support, while the Thais earned a

written guarantee of defense against external aggression and a permanent link to U.S. support.[21]

The United States continued to support repressive Thai military regimes so long as they proclaimed themselves anti-communist. By the late 1950s, this policy created a backlash of anti-American feeling in Thailand. The Thais resented American support of the repressive internal police. The close association of American military advisors and the Thai military regime gave the impression that Americans actually controlled the government. By 1960, the U.S. had provided Thailand with nearly $500 million in aid, of which only 12 percent was for economic and social advancement.[22] The deep American involvement threatened Thai independence and the Thais reacted, predictably, with a more neutral foreign policy. An additional source of disagreement concerned differing perceptions of the communist threat.

In the Eisenhower administration's final years, America became decidedly less willing to bear any cost to contain communism. The Thais began to doubt the sincerity of the United States commitment to SEATO. "For a time, the growing concern of the Thai government with the ineffective action of the US [in Laos] caused it to veer closer toward a neutral foreign policy . . ."[23]

However, during the Kennedy administration, the two countries' views of the communist threat in Southeast Asia

converged. In 1962, the Thanat-Rusk agreement (see Appendix) significantly changed the interpretation of the SEATO agreement by saying the U.S. would defend Thailand against Communist aggression without waiting for prior agreement of other members of SEATO.[24] "This agreement achieved immediate and enthusiastic response in Thailand."[25] In May 1962, Kennedy deployed 4800 troops to Thailand in an attempt to pressure the government of Laos into a neutralist regime. The increasing involvement of the United States in Vietnam played directly into the hands of the Thai government and they welcomed US troops on their soil.

During the next seven years, US military strength in Thailand grew to a high of 50,000 personnel at seven bases. Most of this manpower supported US bombing campaigns in Vietnam, Laos, and Cambodia. Once again, Thailand acted on its perception of its national interest.

> Presumably, the Thais agreed to accept these bases because of the deteriorating conditions in Laos and Vietnam and because Bangkok was granted the right to restrict use of these facilities to the defense of Thailand and its vital interests.[26]

From 1969 to 1976, American forces were gradually withdrawn from Thailand and Vietnam. The deterioration of relations between the two countries started with the breakdown of American consensus in the war effort. "Thailand's leaders became convinced that they were holding empty promises of American support against communist

incursions."[27] Two foreign policy announcements by the United States directly led to the expulsion of American forces from Thailand.

The first blow to US-Thai relations came in Guam in 1969, when the Nixon Doctrine proclaimed the American government no longer viewed the security of Southeast Asia as among its vital interests. Then, in the Shanghai Communique of 1972, the US showed that it placed a higher value on rapprochement with its enemies than protection of its friends. When the Thais lost confidence in America's pledge of security they acted to protect their own national interest, by demanding removal of American forces from Thailand.[28]

The "Mayaguez incident" drove a final divisive wedge between the US and Thailand. In May 1975, an American merchant ship, the S.S. Mayaguez was seized by Kampuchean gunboats. The US promised the Thai government that American planes and troops based in Thailand would not be used in a rescue attempt without prior consultation and permission from Bangkok. In the subsequent rescue of the Mayaguez, Utapao Air Base was used as a staging base for aircraft and marines without informing Thailand. This clear violation of Thai sovereignty left a lasting negative impression on Thailand. It was the "straw that broke the camel's back" in security relations between the two countries.[29]

In the period 1946-1976, Thai foreign policy stressed independence, self-reliance, and flexibility. US-Thai relations were closest when both countries perceived the same interests. When the Thais felt they were being forced to give up their independence with no corresponding increase in security, they moved away from the United States toward neutrality. The United States provided aid to Thailand, and supported Thai governments only when it served the American national interest to do so.

This historical examination leads to two conclusions. First, Thailand and the US have a 150-year history of friendship. Second, while Thailand's actions vis a vis the United States have varied during the years, "her first over-riding concern for the past two centuries has been the preservation of her national integrity in opposition to encroachments on her territory."[30] Friendship between the two governments reflects the extent to which they complement each other's national interests.

If events of the early 70s caused a rift between Washington and Bangkok, the Soviet involvement in Vietnam would quickly heal all wounds. Vietnamese aggression in Kampuchea and Laos forced the Thais to seek American patronage.

Chapter IV Endnotes

[1]See Thomas A. Bailey's, A Diplomatic History of the American People, 8th edition, Meredith Corporation, New York, 1969.

[2]One of the best background books on Thai-American relations is Frank C. Darling's, Thailand and the United States, Public Affairs Press, Washington D.C. 1965. It has been used extensively to provide information on this chapter. The reference cited here is from p. 13.

[3]Darling, Thailand and the US, pp. 13-15.

[4]Darling, Thailand and the US, p. 15.

[5]This interesting historical footnote is from William Bradley et al., Thailand, Domino by Default?, Ohio University Center for International Studies, Athens p. 2.

[6]Darling, Thailand and the US, p. 20.

[7]Bradley, Domino by Default, pp. 40-41.

[8]See Russell H. Fifield's, Americans in Southeast Asia: The Roots of Commitment, Thomas Crowell, New York, 1973, p. 14.

[9]Darling, Thailand and the US, pp. 23-26.

[10]Darling, Thailand and the US, p. 21.

[11]Darling, Thailand and the US, p. 31.

[12]Fifield, Americans in Southeast Asia, p. 15.

[13]Darling, Thailand and the US, p. 34.

[14]Darling, Thailand and the US, p. 34.

[15]Darling, Thailand and the US, p. 35.

[16]Darling, Thailand and the US, p. 36.

[17]Darling, Thailand and the US, p. 43.

[18]Darling, Thailand and the US, pp. 35- 46.

[19]Darling, Thailand and the US, p. 67.

[20]Darling, Thailand and the US, pp. 78-95.

[21]Fifield, Americans in Southeast Asia, p. 240.

[22]Darling, Thailand and the US, p. 171.

[23]Darling, Thailand and the US, p. 202.

[24]Darling, Thailand and the US, p. 207.

[25]See Fred Greene, U.S. Policy and the Security of Asia, McGraw-Hill Book Co., New York, 1968. p. 82.

[26]Greene, U.S. Policy, p.118.

[27]Bradley, Domino by Default, p. 42.

[28]Bradley, Domino by Default, p. 42.

[29]Two sources contain the details of this account. First was K.S. Nathan's article, "US-Thai Relations and ASEAN Security", in Australian Outlook, Vol. 39, No. 2, August 1985, p. 99. Also cited is a book by Richard G. Head, Frisco W. Short, and Robert C. McFarlane, Crisis Resolution: Presidential Decision Making in the Mayaguez and Korean Confrontations, Westview Press, Boulder, 1978, pp. 101-102.

[30]Bradley, Domino by Default, p. 38.

V. THE SOVIET UNION IN SOUTHEAST ASIA AND THE CONVERGENCE OF US-THAI SECURITY INTERESTS

Southeast Asia in the 1980s is both an important arena for global superpower politics and a potentially explosive battleground for regional security. Soviet involvement in the region has grown dramatically since the American withdrawal from Indochina. The Soviet military presence in Cam Ranh Bay is a threat to the global strategic interests of the United States. Soviet military power exercised through the Socialist Republic of Vietnam (SRV) is a clear threat to the regional security of Thailand. However, this Soviet military presence has been a catalyst for the convergence of Thai and American national interests.

This chapter traces the development of Soviet influence in Southeast Asia, outlines Soviet goals and objectives in the area, and examines the Soviet military presence in Cam Ranh Bay. Next, it notes Thailand's reaction to the Soviet threat by observing Thai foreign policy through historical perspective, examines Thailand's current relations with the other regional actors, and analyzes the regional threat it faces from the SRV.

The paper concludes with an assessment of the costs and benefits to the United States of the Soviet presence in Vietnam. The Soviet threat in Southeast Asia appears to

have caused the national security interests of the United States and Thailand to converge.

A. SOVIET PRESENCE IN SOUTHEAST ASIA- BACKWATER TO BLUE WATER

The Soviet involvement in Southeast Asia seems to follow Mao's maxim "the enemy retreats, we advance." Three entries relate Soviet involvement in the region: a chronological history of Soviet presence from WWII to the present; Soviet goals and objectives in Southeast Asia; and an account of the Soviet presence in Cam Ranh Bay and Danang and the threat they pose.

Moscow's presence in Southeast Asia began with its support of North Vietnam's war effort against South Vietnam. In the decade 1969 to 1979, a period roughly corresponding with President Nixon's announcement of the Nixon, or Guam, Doctrine and ending with the Vietnamese invasion of Kampuchea, the Soviets were drawn into the superpower vaccuum in Indochina created by the American retreat. Since 1979, the Soviets have demonstrated a strong, continuing presence in Indochina. They have clearly become a major regional power.

Early Soviet regional policy was reactive rather than proactive. Moscow supported Chinese goals, and displayed little initiative. The Sino-Soviet rift encouraged Moscow to establish direct links with Hanoi, beginning its own

influence in Southeast Asia. In 1964, Hanoi shifted its warfare strategy in South Vietnam from guerilla tactics to general offensive warfare conducted by regular troops of the People's Army of Vietnam (PAVN). Hanoi sought Moscow's support to counter American bombing with anti-aircraft artillery and surface-to-air missiles. Moscow also pledged assistance against an American attack on the North. By 1965, the Soviets had formulated specific objectives to guide their involvement in Indochina.

In the late 1960s the Soviets had three regional objectives:

- Weaken U.S. presence in Asia by forcing U. S. withdrawal from Vietnam;
- Support North Vietnam's effort without jeopardizing US-USSR detente;
- Contain China's regional and global influence.[1]

The Soviet Union increased support to Vietnam from 1965 through 1975. When Saigon fell in 1975, the Soviets had virtually replaced the United States as superpower patron on mainland Southeast Asia. In August 1975, Vietnam signed an economic agreement with the Soviets to coordinate Vietnam's economic plan. The agreement was little more than a pledge to establish closer ties of cooperation.

For the next three years, Southeast Asia remained "a backwater for the Soviet Union, a region in which it had little influence and one that did not assume a high priority in Soviet strategic thinking."[2] In 1978, Soviet

and Vietnamese national interests began to converge. In June, the Vietnamese joined the Council for Mutual Economic Assistance (Comecon), linking their economic fortunes with those of the Soviet-bloc. On November 3, 1978, the Soviet Union and Vietnam signed a treaty of Peace and Friendship, beginning a relationship "born of Soviet opportunism and Vietnamese dependency."[3] Both countries achieved specific goals with this agreement.

The Hanoi government needed military assistance and superpower backing for its aggression into Kampuchea. With Moscow's assistance, Vietnam increased its army by nearly 50%, from 615,000 to 900,000. Within the first six months of 1979, the SRV received about 90,000 tons of material and weapons from the Soviet Union. The next year, Vietnam imported over $871 million in arms, either purchased from the Soviets or acquired with their aid.[4]

Hanoi's need for Soviet backing gave Moscow the perfect avenue to increase its influence in Southeast Asia. Soviet military advisors in Vietnam increased to between 5000-8000. The Soviet's return for their investment was Cam Ranh Bay, the warm-water Pacific port sought since the Chinese expelled them from Port Arthur in 1954.[5] The Soviets now had a physical presence on mainland Southeast Asia.

In December 1978, the Peoples Army of Vietnam (PAVN) launched a Soviet-style attack across the Kampuchean

border. The tank-led infantry quickly drove across the country to the Thai border. Within days, the PAVN occupied the country, deposed Pol Pot, and installed Heng Samrin as the head of a new puppet government.[6] This invasion was clearly the major event in Southeast Asia since the withdrawal of the United States.

> Southeast Asia is again one of the centers of superpower contention, which is in turn giving a boost to the forces of militarism in the region. The Vietnamese invasion of Kampuchea is the principal cause of these developments.[7]

In February 1979, the People's Republic of China launched a punitive raid across the Vietnamese border to teach Hanoi a lesson. During this incursion, the Soviets deployed ten ships to the South China Sea as a warning to China.[8] Although there was no clear winner in this border war, the conflict had two distinct outcomes. First, it brought China into open competition for regional domination with the Soviet Union and the SRV. It also clearly entrenched Soviet presence and influence in Southeast Asia.[9] One final event influenced the present course of Southeast Asian affairs.

On June 23-24 1980, the Vietnamese crossed into Thailand in pursuit of rebel Kymer forces. During the Thai military response several Thai soldiers were killed, and two Thai aircraft were shot down by Soviet provided surface-to-air missiles. The Thais requested aid from the United States. President Carter responded by ordering an

immediate airlift of arms under the provisions of the Rusk-Thanat agreement of 1962. (see Appendix)[10] The stage was set for the current balance of power relationship in Southeast Asia. The Soviets and Vietnamese stand against the United States, China, Thailand, and ASEAN.

Aside from sporadic fighting on the Kampuchean border and occasional Sino-Viet border skirmishes, the situation in Southeast Asia has not essentially changed since 1980. The Soviets continued their aid to Vietnam and increased their strength in Cam Ranh Bay and Danang. Zagoria and Simon outline current Soviet goals and objectives in Southeast Asia:

- to contain Chinese power and influence in the region;
- to weaken American power and to separate the United States from its allies and friends as part of a continuing effort to shift the global balance of power more in the Soviet favor;
- to prevent ASEAN from developing into a pro-Western bloc with security ties to the West and/or China;
- to help consolidate a group of pro-Soviet communist states in Vietnam, Laos and Cambodia and to draw those states into the Soviet orbit;
- to gain increased and regular access to air and naval faciities in Vietnam and elsewhere in the region to facilitate the projection of Soviet power.[11]

The Soviet Union pursues these goals primarily through Vietnam. By supporting Vietnam's domination of Indochina, the Soviets encircle China's southern flank, with a PAVN force of over 1 million. The PAVN, third largest standing army in the world, also provides a coercive lever to

threaten mainland Southeast Asia. The massive buildup at Cam Ranh Bay gives the Soviets a viable bluewater navy in the South China Sea, capable of power projection, sealane interdiction, and a second coercive lever over the ASEAN nations via "gunboat diplomacy."[12]

In pursuit of these goals, Soviet aid to Vietnam is enormous. Moscow has written off all Vietnamese debt prior to 1975. It provided Hanoi with an estimated $5 billion in arms aid from 1978 to 1984. Some 2,500 Soviet military advisors are in Vietnam to support this program. Through 1983, the Soviets had also provided over $4 billion in economic aid to Vietnam. The Vietnamese are dependent on the Soviet Union for all their oil, 25 - 30% of their rice, and over 90% of their total imports of all other kinds. The Soviets are buying Vietnamese friendship at a cost of $3 million per day.[13] It is an economic stake that Moscow will not give up without a struggle. Even in the event of future problems between Moscow and Hanoi, the Soviet Union is a major regional power in Southeast Asia.

In the past twenty years, the Soviet Union has purchased its influence in Southeast Asia through economic and military assistance to Vietnam. Because of these efforts, the Soviets view themselves as coequal in the correlation of forces in Southeast Asia and expect to be treated as such.[14] It is their strength in Cam Ranh Bay and Danang which gives the Soviets confidence in the

correlation of forces. The Soviet presence in Cam Ranh Bay and Danang is the major threat to Western security in Southeast Asia.

Cam Ranh Bay is the largest Soviet naval forward deployment base outside the Warsaw Pact. It is important to the Soviets as a naval resupply port, a communications center, and an air base for reconnaissance, sealane interdiction, and strategic bombing. It threatens Southeast Asia because of current Soviet assets and capability to rapidly expand forces on short notice.

Cam Ranh Bay evolved from an infrequently used support facility to a major staging complex for the Soviet Pacific Ocean Fleet, the largest of its four fleets. At any time, it is "home port" to between 25 and 30 ships, four to six submarines, and occasionally the aircraft carrier Minsk.

Since it is 2200 miles from Vladivostock and 3700 miles from Petropavlovsk, it provides a great advantage in sailing time for Indian Ocean deployment. It allows the Soviet surface fleet and submarine forces to avoid the chokepoints in the Sea of Japan. The Soviet Fleet has been used twice in the region for a show of force.

The first time was during the Sino-Viet border war during 1979. In 1980, a task force led by the aircraft carrier Minsk steamed into the Gulf of Thailand to show displeasure over Thai Prime Minister Prem's visit to the PRC. Recent Soviet training exercises in the area have

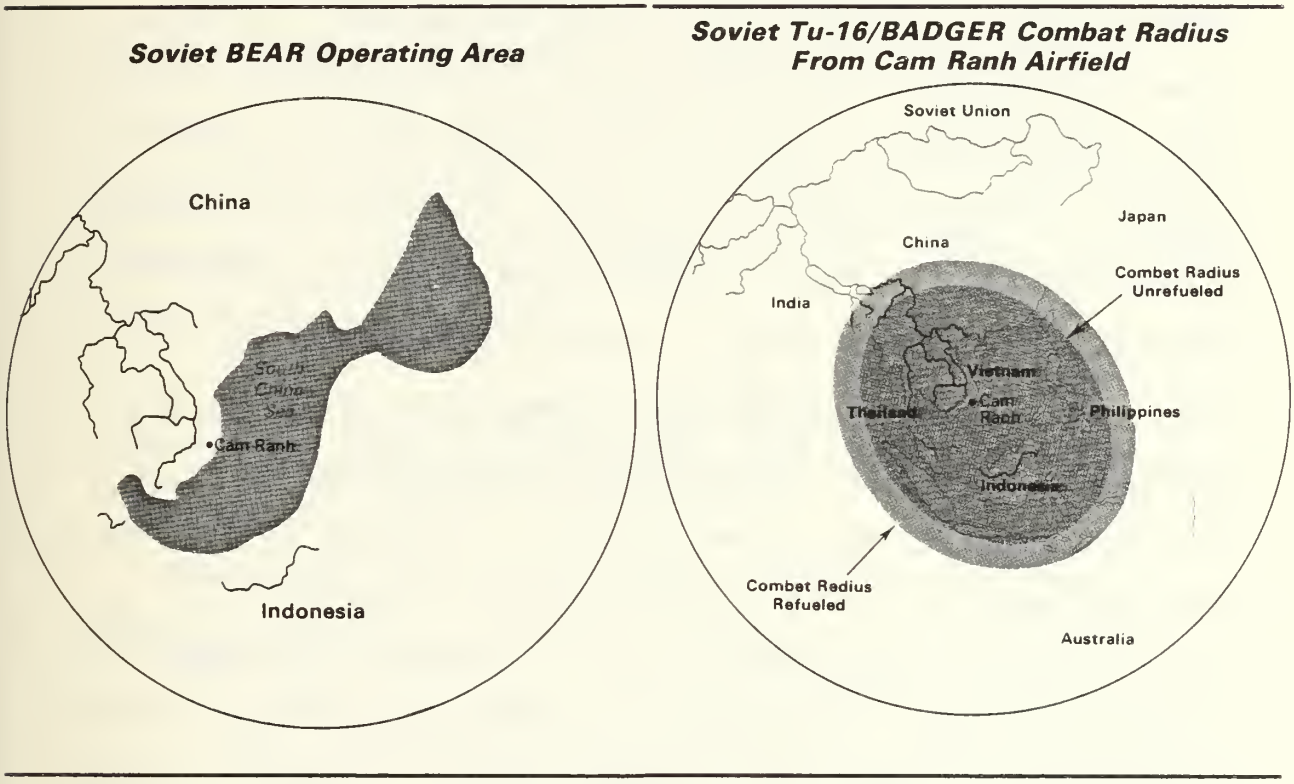
focussed on antisea lines of communication and convoy interdiction.

The Soviets have added six floating piers at Cam Ranh, a floating dry dock, and improved petroleum storage facilities through construction of a permanent fuel reserve tank with 1.4 million litre capacity. These facilities are among the largest outside the Soviet Union. They have added several long-range, high frequency, direction finding radio sites. The upgraded communications facilities now allow Soviets to monitor US radio communications from Clark Air Base, Subic Bay Naval Base, and transmissions to the US fleet in the Indian Ocean.

But perhaps the most threatening aspect of Soviet strength in Cam Ranh Bay and Danang is its use to project naval aviation. Between four and eight TU-142 Bear F and TU-95 Bear D reconnaissance aircraft routinely conduct maritime surveillance of submarine and surface shipping in the South China Sea. With an unrefueled range of 8300 kilometers, they can cover all the key straits in the ASEAN region, parts of the Philippine Sea, and the Pacific Ocean southeast of Japan. (see Figure 2) The Bears are regularly deployed on two month rotation from Vladivostock.

Beginning in November 1983, the Soviets deployed up to ten TU-16/Badger medium range bombers at Cam Ranh. By 1985, the force of Badgers had grown to 16. Variants of

the Badger at Cam Ranh are capable of nuclear or conventional strike, electronic countermeasures, and tanker functions. The 3100 kilometer (Figure 2) unrefueled combat radius of the 10 strike capable Badgers allow them to attack all the ASEAN capitals, major straits, Guam, Trust Territory of the Pacific, and Northern Australia.



Source: Soviet Military Power 1985, p.130

Figure 2 Soviet Bear/Badger Operating Areas

The air defense facilities now include a permanent squadron of about a dozen MiG-23/Flogger B aircraft to provide all-weather air defense for Soviet ships and aircraft operation out of Cam Ranh.[15]

The Soviet naval buildup at Cam Ranh Bay extends the potential battleground far from Soviet home waters. It threatens the critical sealines supplying oil to ASEAN, Japan, and Korea. Former Commander-in-Chief of the U.S. forces in the Pacific, (now Chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff) Admiral William Crowe claims the greatest concern about the Soviet's Cam Ranh presence is a support structure which allows them to expand forces there on very short notice. He states the Soviet goal in the area is "probably to politically isolate the region from the U.S. and allied nations to be able to assert its will throughout the region."[16] Clearly, an American presence in the area is vitally important to counter such Soviet action.

The Soviet force at Cam Ranh Bay and Danang at any one time includes 25 - 30 ships and as many aircraft. This force threatens regional security of Thailand and ASEAN through coercion. It threatens global security with interdiction of sealines of communication. Finally, it is a major challenge to American presence and influence in Southeast Asia. Much can be learned by an examination of Thailand's reaction to the threat posed by the Soviets and Vietnamese.

B. THAILAND'S REACTION TO THE SOVIET THREAT

The Thais have an historic reputation for being accommodating and flexible in their foreign policy. Following the withdrawal of American forces from mainland Southeast Asia, Bangkok initially attempted to follow a non-provocative foreign policy. The Thais attempted to accommodate the policies of their former communist adversaries: the PRC, Soviet Union, and Vietnam.

Unfortunately, Thailand's best intentions gave way to the necessity of protecting itself from Vietnamese invasion. The key events responsible for Thailand's current alignment with China and the United States were the Vietnamese invasion of Kampuchea in 1978, and the Thai-Viet border skirmishes of 1980.

> A balanced foreign policy for Thailand entailed developing relations with China and the Soviet Union while inducing the United States to retain an interest in the area.[17]

Thailand's first initiatives toward this balanced foreign policy were a series of ministerial visits with China in 1974. The Thais wanted the Chinese to reduce their support for Thai insurgency groups. As a measure of goodwill the Thai National Assembly revoked the ban on trade with China imposed by Marshall Sarit in 1958.

Kukrit Pramoj became prime minister on March 14, 1975. Five days later he announced the decision to establish diplomatic relations with China, and to seek withdrawal of

American troops within one year. Removal of US troops was not a precondition for diplomatic relations with the Chinese, who felt the American forces could serve as a check against Soviet presence.[18] Rather, it was a move toward establishing diplomatic relations with the Vietnamese.

In July, Kukrit and President Marcos of the Philippines agreed to phase out the SEATO agreement because its existence complicated Thai-Viet negotiations. Diplomatic relations between Thailand and Vietnam were established on August 6, 1976, but since animosity within the Thai government was still high, the actual exchange of Thai-Viet ambassadors was delayed until December 1977.

Thailand wanted friendship with Moscow without accepting the Soviet's 1969 collective security proposal. They also wanted to remain friendly with Beijing.

> The Thai leadership sought Soviet protection against Vietnam without accepting the logic of the collective security proposal which would have alienated the Chinese.[19]

In April 1978, Prime Minister Kriangsak visited Beijing to meet with Deng Xiaoping. The meeting was the beginning of what was to be perceived as a Thai-Chinese alignment. "Convergence of interests against Vietnam ensured the visit was a success 'almost beyond our most optimistic hopes.'"[20]

On the eve of the Vietnamese invasion of Kampuchea, Thailand had established diplomatic relations with China,

Vietnam and the Soviet Union while maintaining a neutral stance on both the Sino-Viet and Sino-Soviet conflicts. The Vietnamese invasion of Kampuchea forced the Thais to abandon a policy of strict non-alignment with China for a closer protective relationship.[21] It also brought both superpowers back into the diplomatic picture in Southeast Asia.

In February 1979, Prime Minister Kriangsak visited Washington to gain President Carter's assurance of protection for Thailand from invasion under the provisions of the Manila Pact. In March, Kriangsak visited Moscow assuring Bangkok's neutrality in the Kampuchean situation. He, in turn, received assurance that Vietnam had no plans to attack Thailand.

In June 1980, the Vietnamese crossed the Thai border at Non Mark Moon and engaged Thai ground and air forces. "The event showed Thai leaders that they could not rely upon Soviet assurances regarding Vietnam's behavior."[22] The event signalled the end of Thailand's balanced foreign policy and solidly aligned the Thais, Chinese, and Americans into an anti-Soviet bloc in Southeast Asia.

Thai reaction to the Soviet threat in Southeast Asia initially sought accommodation with every regional actor. Bangkok felt Thai interests were best protected by neutrality. But from 1975-1980, the buffer between Thailand and Vietnamese communism eroded. Thailand is now the "front line" Asian state against Vietnamese aggression. Realizing that "you can't please everyone" in its pursuit of security and

protection, Thailand turned to the Sino-American bloc for support.

Southeast Asia is now split into two camps. The Soviets and Vietnamese are pitted against Thailand, ASEAN, China, and the United States. Despite minor differances, Thailand shares remarkably good relations with its allies. Thailand has also attempted to maintain a dialogue with its adversaries.

C. THAILAND AND THE OTHER SOUTHEAST ASIAN ACTORS

1. Thailand and the Peoples Republic of China

Thailand and China are like two traditional adversaries who "bury the hatchet" to gang up on the playground bully. The Thais and the Chinese have the same perspectives against a common enemy--Vietnam. Two historic rivalries unite the efforts of Thailand and China.

The Hanoi-Beijing clash is rooted in ancient hatred and the fundamental perceptions of the status of Kampuchea. The Vietnamese view Kampuchea as being historically in Hanoi's suzerainty. The Chinese see Kampuchea as an independent political entity, albeit one which leans decidedly toward Beijing in its foreign policy.[23] Thailand and Vietnam have fought for generations over the borderlands along Kampuchea and Laos. The effect of these two historic rifts has been a rapprochement between the Middle Kingdom and the Land of Smiles.

Thailand gained two benefits from its rapprochement with China. China is a protector with a demonstrated willingness to shed blood to defend Thailand; and China has withdrawn support of communist led insurgencies within Thailand.

> Thailand has benefited from its diplomatic relations with China. First, the decrease in Chinese assistance to the CPT . . . has subdued communist terrorism in the country . . . . Second, the existing Sino-Thai relations have become the major force in Southeast Asia to check the increasing Soviet-supported aggressiveness of Vietnam. This assumption can be substantiated by the outbreak of violence between China and Vietnam in 1978 and the Chinese pledge to give its full support to Thailand if it is attacked by Vietnam.[24]

Currently, Bangkok and Beijing agree on their Kampuchean policy. Both generally support the total withdrawal of Vietnamese troops, followed by U.N. supervised elections of candidates from the Coalition Government of Democratic Kampuchea (CGDK).

The CGDK is composed of three factions: supporters of Prince Sihanouk, the Khmer Rouge, led by Khieu Samphan, and Sonn Sann's forces of the Khmer Peoples National Liberation Front (KPNLF). The Chinese, while favoring the Khmer Rouge, support the total resistance movement with arms and equipment. Bangkok provides sanctuary for resistance movements and refugees within its borders.[25]

The Chinese have pledged to defend Thailand and ASEAN against Vietnam, and have maintained pressure on the Vietnamese borders. In November 1985, the Chinese gave

their first military aid grant to Thailand. The aid package included 130mm artillery pieces and 24 Chinese made Model 59 battle tanks. Thailand willingly took the aid from its former communist adversary. Supreme Commander Arthit answered critics by saying, "he saw nothing wrong in receiving military aid from friendly countries, be it the United States or China if the aid has no strings attached."[26]

Beginning in 1976, the Chinese slowly withdrew their support for the Communist Party of Thailand (CPT). Throughout the 60s and 70s, the Voice of People's Thailand (VOPT), a clandestine radio based in China, repeatedly broadcast support for patriotic freedom fighters in Thailand. But in July 1979, the VOPT made its last transmission, calling for a united struggle against foreign aggression. The withdrawal of Chinese support has had a decisive, negative affect on the CPT and other insurgent movements in Thailand.[27]

The Thai-Chinese relationship benefits both parties. Thailand has been the middleman in the uneasy relationship between China and ASEAN on the Kampuchean issue.[28] Thailand has given the Chinese a voice within ASEAN and has partially allayed ASEAN fears of Chinese intentions. Bangkok also tacitly supports the communist Khmer Rouge resistance movement.

The PRC protects Thailand from Vietnamese invasion and severed ties with insurgent movements within Thailand. This mutually beneficial relationship, is largely a product of Soviet-backed Vietnamese aggression. Another relationship benefitting from the Sino-Vietnamese threat is that between Thailand and its non-communist allies within ASEAN.

2. Thailand and ASEAN

Thailand is both an ASEAN member and a sovereign actor. The bond between ASEAN members has been strengthed by the Indochinese threat. Thailand is the "front line" ASEAN state against the Socialist Republic of Vietnam (SRV) and has emerged as an ASEAN leader.

The Vietnamese threat to Thailand was a tremendous impetus to ASEAN unity. Security cooperation has significantly increased since the 1978 Vietnamese invasion. Although ASEAN has avoided multilateral security efforts, each country seems to be developing regional military capabilities. Malaysia is even planning an air training base on the Thai-Malaysian border which could support joint operations.[29] Unification has been a benefit of the threat.

The Kampuchean issue politically galvanized ASEAN. The ASEAN states were leaders in bringing the Kampuchean problem before the United Nations. Because of their

united, organized effort, they are recognized as a political entity. Again, it was the common threat which raised ASEAN prestige in the world forum.

The ASEAN states are split in their views of China. While all the states welcome China as Thailand's protector, Malaysia and Indonesia are suspicious of China's long term intentions for Southeast Asia. Nonetheless, Thailand, ASEAN and China have reached a middle ground over the approach to short term goals in Kampuchea, because they distrust the Soviet-Vietnamese bloc more than each other.

> From ASEAN's point of view, the USSR had lost its credibility . . . the common policy shared by Moscow and Hanoi vis a vis the Cambodian problem has not only increased China's involvement in Thailand but it has also led to a convergence of policy between the ASEAN states and China insofar as Cambodia is concerned.[30]

The Soviet-Vietnamese threat forced ASEAN toward greater unity, politically and militarily. It also allowed the ASEAN states to compromise their perceptions of China.[31] As Thailand draws closer to ASEAN and China, the relationship has come at the cost of relations with the Soviets.

3. Thailand and the Soviet Union

Although Thailand maintains diplomatic relations with the Soviet Union, the rapport between the two nations is strained. Both nations have an "axe to grind" with the other. Thailand doubts Soviet diplomatic rhetoric. The

Thais perceive the Soviet regional buildup as a threat to security. The Soviets criticise the Thais for their stand on Kampuchea and continued close military cooperation with the United States.

Thailand no longer believes Soviet promises of closer, friendlier ties. The Bangkok Post reported in January 1985, "Thailand has told the Soviet Union it should show through action rather than empty words that it intends to improve relations between the two countries."[32] Since the 1980 border incursions, the Thais hold little faith in Moscow's ability to restrain Vietnamese aggression. In a 1983 diplomatic visit to Thailand, Soviet Deputy Foreign Minister Kapitsa reportedly offered Moscow's services as a peacemaker in regional matters. The Thai government apparently found more rhetoric than substance in his offer. "A high ranking foreign minister was reported to say, 'How can the Soviet Union be a guarantor of peace when it has not responded to ASEAN's call for a reduction of aid to Hanoi?'"[33]

Soviet use of the carrier task force Minsk near the Thai port of Sattahip gives the Thais reason to fear the Soviet military buildup in Cam Ranh Bay. Recently, Bangkok took further measures to reduce Soviet influence in Thailand. It prohibited unauthorized Soviet overflight of Thailand by Aeroflot planes destined for Kampuchea and Vietnam. In 1983, the Thai government expelled a Soviet

trade official for espionage.[34] Soviet-Thai trade declined by over one-half from 1981-1983. Clearly Bangkok has separated itself from the Soviet Union.

Within the discontent, however, is the clear willingness to recognize that Moscow is a legitimate regional actor. In July 1985, General Thep, Thai Political Affairs Director told the Soviet Deputy Director General for Southeast Asia that, "as a superpower, the Soviet Union should play an important role in contributing to Southeast Asia's peace and stability."[35]

The Soviets have their own complaints against Thailand. Moscow is critical of the Thai-ASEAN-Chinese stance on the Kampuchean issue; it condemns Thailand for tolerating the Kampuchean resistance movement; and it fears Thailand's growing military cooperation with the United States. The Soviet press increasingly criticises Thai-US joint military exercises, the growth of Thai military capabilities, and the possibility that Thailand may be used as an American military base for the Rapid Deployment Force.[36]

Thai-Soviet relations are strained because of the Soviet presence in Southeast Asia. These show little sign of improvement, and serve to drive the Thais into closer relations with China and the United States.

4. Thailand and Vietnam, Laos, and Kampuchea

The relationship between Thailand and Vietnam is one of historic enmity and occasional open warfare. The Thai government fears a Vietnamese invasion, opposes the Vietnamese occupation of Kampuchea, and has a continuing border dispute with Vietnam's puppet state Laos.

Regardless of the outcome of border skirmishes, Thailand has good reason to fear the Vietnamese military threat. In Kampuchea, the PAVN forces total between 160,000 and 200,000. There are another 40,000 PAVN troops deployed in Laos. There are nearly 800,000 troops in Vietnam itself. The Royal Thai Army counter the Vietnamese threat with a force of around 163,000 troops.[37]

The Thais and Vietnamese are totally opposed on the Kampuchean question. The Vietnamese view Kampuchea as part of a united Indochina under their control. The Thais want Kampuchea returned to an independent buffer state. There is no future compromise foreseen between the two countries on this issue.

Finally, the relationship between Thailand and Laos is strained. The two countries have fought over their common border for centuries. The specific disagreement centers on the location of the watershed between the Menam Chao Phraya river system and the Mekong. The argument concerns three villages on the border: Ban Mai, Ban Kang

and Ban Savang. While the controversy continues, only one sure method applies to ownership of the disputed territory--possesion is "nine-tenths of the law."[38]

The relations between Thailand and Vietnam and its client states are governed by traditional hatreds and disputes over controversial borders. Soviet involvement in Southeast Asia gave aggressive Vietnam the confidence to turn an old feud into open conflict. The Viet-Thai relationship is the most volatile regional security issue in Southeast Asia.

D. THE UNITED STATES AND THE SOVIET THREAT-- RESURRECTION OF SOUTHEAST ASIAN POLICY

When the United States withdrew from mainland Southeast Asia few policy makers could have predicted that the region would reemerge as a key policy area within ten years. Yet the Soviet military presence in Cam Ranh Bay, the Vietnamese invasion of Kampuchea, and the Vietnamese incursions into Thailand have brought Southeast Asia sharply back into the focus of American foreign policy.

While the Soviet presence in Indochina has a cost for the United States on both global and regional levels it also has three benefits to US policy. It caused the United States to recognize Southeast Asia as an important area; forced the US to reaffirm its commitment to the free nations of the region; and it drove China, Thailand and the

its ASEAN allies into a more positive view of the United States.

On a global level, the United States is concerned with the Soviet buildup in Cam Ranh Bay. American military planners are concerned with countering the Soviet threat, keeping the sealines of communication open, and preventing the Soviets from using their navy to apply political pressure to the ASEAN nations.[39]

On a regional level, America is tied by treaty and executive agreement to protecting Thailand from communist aggression. Recent joint Soviet-Vietnamese amphibious operations demonstrate a potential threat to other ASEAN nations. China serves as a deterrent power to Vietnamese land invasion, but only the United States can provide the full range of deterrence against Soviet regional aggression.

The Soviet presence in Southeast Asia has advantages. It caused the US to take another look at the importance of ASEAN. Next, the United States reaffirmed its commitments to the defense of Southeast Asia. Secretary of State Schultz told the ASEAN ministers in 1985 that since 1981 the US had greatly strengthened its naval and air presence in the Pacific.

> We have added 15 Perry-class frigates, 8 Spruance-class destroyers, and 6 Los Angeles-class submarines . . . we have added to our air forces 112 F/A-18s, two squadrons of F-16s, and 116 new Blackhawk helicopters . . . . These

> actions demonstrate our intention and our will to remain of paramount importance to the Pacific.[40]

The recent Philippine elections made American concerns over the continued use of Clark AFB and Subic Bay naval base front page news. Clearly, the Soviet threat has renewed America's commitment to Southeast Asian and the ASEAN states.

Finally, the previous analysis of Thailand's relations with other regional actors shows the effect of Soviet presence on the unification of China, Thailand, and ASEAN against the Soviet-Viet threat, while strengthening their ties to the United States. Soviet threat forces the regional actors to submerge differences and turn toward United States assistance.

> Soviet intrusion into the region marked a watershed not just for Thailand but for ASEAN in that it called into question the region's ability to contain local conflicts and to exclude great power intervention.[41]

It would be inaccurate to say the Soviet threat has turned these nations into a pro-American security alliance, but they are solidly opposed to Soviet adventurism in Southeast Asia.

The Soviet presence in Southeast Asia is a threat to regional security and the strategic balance of power in Asia. But it provides the United States with a renewed interest in the region, and our ASEAN allies with a firm American commitment. Thailand, ASEAN, and China are

coalescing as a group opposed to Soviet regional aggression.

E. THAILAND AND THE UNITED STATES--HELLO OLD FRIEND

The growth of Soviet power and influence in the region had a significant affect on US-Thai relations. Although the security goals of both countries differ in some respects, the outcome is the same.

Thailand fears invasion from Vietnam and superpower intimidation by the Soviet Union. Its primary concern is survival as a free nation. The United States wants to counter the growth of Soviet military might in Southeast Asia. Washington is also committed to defending Thailand from invasion.

Since 1980, the United States has increased security assistance to Thailand from $39 million to $107 million, "indicating that the US placed great importance on its relations with Thailand and wanted to help modernize the Thai armed forces."[42] As a positive demonstration of American commitment to keep Thailand free from Vietnamese aggression, the two countries have conducted joint military exercises each year since 1981.

The Soviet-Vietnamese threat to Southeast Asia renewed the relationship between Thailand and the United States. The threat allowed the common national interests of the two nations to converge.

> Kampuchea enables US-Thai security interests to converge and, by expansion, promotes a growing identity of US-ASEAN security interests . . . US-Thai relations will be constantly governed by the mutual objectives of preventing the emergence of a power or coalition that can dominate the region and thereby undermine regional stability.[43]

It is in the common interests of both countries to keep Thailand strong, independent, and free.

This chapter had three goals: to trace the rise of Soviet power and influence in Southeast Asia; to examine Thailand's reaction to the Soviet threat; and to analyze the costs and benefits of the Soviet threat in Southeast Asia on US foreign policy. In the past two decades the Soviets transformed the PAVN into the third largest force in the world through massive amounts of military and economic assistance. In return for this support, they secured a major military post on the South China Sea. This bastion challenges US forces in the area, imperils the key straits and sea lines of communication in the Western Pacific, and provides a political threat to the ASEAN nations.

The Soviet threat to Thailand forced the Thais to abandon a "balanced foreign policy" for one which aligned itself with China and the United States. However, this threat fosters increased cooperation between Thailand, China, and the ASEAN nations.

The Soviet presence in Southeast Asia caused America to refocus its emphasis on the area, reaffirm it commitments

to the ASEAN nations, and renew its friendship with Thailand. While Soviet influence in the region has many undesirable effects on the free nations of the West, it has undeniably forced a convergence in the national interests of the United States and Thailand.

Chapter V Endnotes

[1]The three objectives addressed here are Paul Kelemen's. For an excellent chronological account of Soviet involvement in Southeast Asia see Kelemen's article, "SOVIET STRATEGY IN SOUTHEAST ASIA: THE VIETNAM FACTOR," Asian Survey, Vol. XXIV, No. 3, March 1984, pp. 335-348.

[2]See the chapter written by Donald S. Zagoria and Sheldon W. Simon, "Soviet Policy in Southeast Asia," in the book edited by Zagoria, Soviet Policy in East Asia, Yale University Press, New Haven, 1982, pp. 153-173.

[3]Two sources provide the chronology of Soviet-Viet relations in 1978. The first was Allen E. Goodman's essay, "The Case for Establishing Relations with Vietnam," from William A. Buckingham ed., Defense Planning for the 1990s and the Changing International Environment, National Defense University Press, Washington D.C., 1984, pp. 56-59. Also referenced was David Fitzgerald's article, "The Soviets in Southeast Asia", in Proceedings, February 1986, p.50. The quote is from p. 183 of Douglas Pike's chapter, "The People's Army of Vietnam," in Claude A. Buss ed., National Security Interests in the Pacific Basin, Hoover Institution Press, Stanford, 1985, pp. 173-243.

[4]Kelemen, "SOVIET STRATEGY", p.337.

[5]Discussion of the Soviet's drive for a warm-water port is found in Denis Warner's, "Point, Counterpoint in the South China Sea," Pacific Defence Reporter, August 1984, pp. 53-54.

[6]From a description of the Vietnamese attack by Douglas Pike in his chapter, "THE PEOPLE'S ARMY OF VIETNAM," in Role of the Military in Contemporary Asian Societies, Edward Olsen and Stephen Jurika ed., Westview Press, Boulder, 1986, pp. 121-134.

[7]Kelemen, "SOVIET STRATEGY", p.341.

[8]Zagoria and Simon, Soviet Policy, p.155.

[9]Pike, "People's Army of Vietnam", p. 182.

[10]The incident is reported in several articles. Col. C.M. Noor Arshad talks about the incident on p. 36 of his

article, "THE IMPLICATIONS OF SOVIET-VIETNAMESE RELATIONS," in the Asian Defence Journal, January 1986, pp. 35-39. Implications of the attack are also included in K.S. Nathan's article, "US-THAI RELATIONS AND ASEAN SECURITY," in Australian Outlook, Vol. 39, No.2, August 1985, pp.99-104.

[11]Zagoria and Simon, Soviet Policy, p.155.

[12]Zagoria and Simon, Soviet Policy, p.155.

[13]These statistics are a composite of numerous references. Soviet Military Power 1985, Government Printing Office, Washington D.C., 1985, pp. 113-131. Warner, 53. Kelemen, p.347. See also Admiral Crowe's address to the World Affairs Council, "Pacific Perspectives" as published in the Los Angeles World Affairs Council Journal, Spring, 1984, Vol. III, No. 2.

[14]Chi Su addresses this issue in the traditional "correlation of forces" phraseology so important to Sovietologists, in his article, "US-CHINA RELATIONS: SOVIET VIEWS," in Asian Survey, Vol. XXIII, No. 5, May 1983, pp. 555-579. Some Soviet specialists state the correlation of forces concept cannot be regionalized. They argue that the Soviets perceive themselves to be superior in the correlation of forces in the world as a whole. A strong case can also be made to prove the Soviet strength is quite inferior to Western military capability in the area. The point is clear. The Soviets are a power in Southeast Asia.

[15]Many sources were used to compile the data on the Soviet military presence in Cam Ranh Bay and Danang. Among those previously cited are Warner, "Point, Counterpoint," pp.53-54, and Soviet Military Power, pp. 130-131. Also cited were Donald Zagoria, "THE USSR AND ASIA IN 1984," Asian Survey, Vol. XXV, No. 1, January 1985, p 27; Admiral Crowe, "THE ARMED FORCES OF ASIA-PACIFIC No. 17--The US Cannot, and Should Not Go It Alone," Pacific Defence Reporter, August 1985, pp.11-15; Michael Richardson, "Defending South-East Asia," Pacific Defence Reporter, February 1985, pp. 5-10; Edgar L. Prina, "Red Sails in the Sunset: USSR Continues it Buildup in the Pacific," Seapower, March 1985; Ralph A. Cossa, "SOVIET EYES ON ASIA," Air Force Magazine, August 1985, pp. 54-58; and John Dorrance, "Coping with the Soviet Pacific threat," Pacific Defence Reporter, July 1983, pp.22-29.

[16]Richardson, "Defending South-East Asia," pp. 39-40.

[17]For an excellent account of Thailand's post-Vietnam foreign policy negotiations see Leszek Buszynski's, "THAILAND: THE EROSION OF A BALANCED FOREIGN POLICY," Asian Survey, Vol. XXII, No. 11, November 1982, pp. 1037-1055.

[18]Buszynski, "THAILAND," p. 1043, author quotes from the Straits Times, January 16, 1973.

[19]Buszynski, "THAILAND," p. 1043.

[20]Buszynski, "THAILAND," p. 1041.

[21]Buszynski, "THAILAND," p. 1041.

[22]Buszynski, "THAILAND," p. 1045.

[23]For background on Thai-Chinese relations, see Sheldon Simon's article, "CHINA AND SOUTH-EAST ASIA: PROTECTOR OR PREDATOR?" Australian Outlook, Vol. 39, No. 2, August 1985, pp. 93-98; Pao-Min Chang, "BEIJING VERSUS HANOI: THE DIPLOMACY OVER KAMPUCHEA," Asian Survey, Vol. XXIII, No. 5, May 1983, pp. 599-618. For details on the PRC's withdrawal of support for the Thai communist party see, William R. Heaton, "CHINA AND SOUTHEAST ASIAN COMMUNIST MOVEMENTS: THE DECLINE OF DUAL TRACK DIPLOMACY," Asian Survey, Vol. XXII, No. 8, August 1982, pp. 779-799 and John Girling's article, "THAILAND IN GRAMSCIAN PERSPECTIVE," in Pacific Affairs, Vol. 57, No. 3, Fall 1984, p. 398.

[24]This information is from the Daily Report: Asia and Pacific, Foreign Broadcast Information Service (FBIS) (National Technical Information Service, Department of Commerce, Springfield, Virginia, 3 July, 1985, p. J1) as reported in the Siam Rat on 1 July 1985. The article commemorated, "The Decade of Thai-Chinese Amity." Subsequent references will be listed as FBIS.

[25]This is a simplification of the debate which is perhaps the most important issue of Chinese-Thai-ASEAN relations. A thorough brief on all the negotiations and proposals is beyond the scope of this chapter. For a detailed description of the events see previously cited: Chang, "BEIJING VERSUS HANOI"; Buszynski,"THAILAND"; Simon, "PROTECTOR OR PREDATOR." Two other background sources are Elizabeth Becker's "KAMPUCHEA IN 1983 FURTHER FROM PEACE," Asian Survey, Vol. XXIV, No. 1, December 1983, pp. 37-48; and Michael Eiland's, "KAMPUCHEA IN 1984: YET FURTHER FROM PEACE," Asian Survey, Vol. XXV, No. 1, January 1985, pp. 106-113.

[26]The account of this arms transfer was found in the FBIS (19 November 1985, J1) as reported in Bangkok's The Nation, 19 November 1985, pp. 1-2.

[27]Heaton, "DUAL TRACK DIPLOMACY," pp. 779-799; and Girling, "GRAMSCIAN PERSPECTIVE", p. 398.

[28]Sheldon Simon provides two essays which give information on the Thai-Chinese relationship; one "CHINA AND SOUTHEAST ASIA: PROTECTOR OR PREDATOR", has previously been cited. The other article of note is his chapter, "REGIONAL THREAT ENVIRONMENTS IN ASIA: PROBLEMS OF AGGRGATION," in Role of the Military in Contemporary Asian Societies, Edward Olsen and Stephen Jurika eds., Westview Press, Boulder, 1986, pp. 121-134.

[29]Simon, "REGIONAL THREAT ENVIRONMENTS IN ASIA: PROBLEMS OF AGGREGATION," pp. 121-134.

[30]Noor, "IMPLICATIONS OF SOVIET-VIETNAMESE RELATIONS," p. 39.

[31]Simon, "CHINA AND SOUTH-EAST ASIA: PROTECTOR OR PREDATOR," p.98.

[32]This information is from FBIS (18 January 1985, p. J3) as reported in an article in the Bangkok Post, 18 January 1985, p. 1.

[33]FBIS (2 April 1985, p. J1) as reported in the Bangkok Post on 2 April 1985, p. 5.

[34]See Thomas P. Thornton, "THE USSR AND ASIA IN 1983: STAYING THE COURSE," Asian Survey, Vol. XXIV, No. 1, January 1984, pp. 1-16; and Zagoria, "THE USSR IN ASIA IN 1984", p. 24.

[35]FBIS (27 July 1985, p. J1) as reported by Thatsanyawet Banyat to the Bankok Post.

[36]See Thornton, "THE USSR IN ASIA IN 1983," pp. 1-16.

[37]These statistics on PAVN from Olsen and Jurika's previously noted Role of the Military in Contemporary Asian Societies, pp.121-134.

[38]For a more thorough discussion of the border problems see Pheuiphanh Ngaosyvathn's, "THAI-LAO RELATIONS A LAO VIEW," and Sarasin Viraphol's, "REFLECTIONS ON THAI-LAO RELATIONS," both in Asian Survey, Vol. XXV, No. 12, December 1985, pp. 12242-1259 and 1262-1276 respectively.

[39]This paragraph is a composite of ideas drawn from several previously noted articles; see Zagoria, "THE USSR IN ASIA", p. 27; Crowe, "The US Cannot and Should Not Go It Alone,", pp. 11-15; Warner, "Point, Counterpoint,"; and Prina, "Red Sails in the Sunset."

[40]This quote was published in a speech by Secretary Schultz, "The U.S. and ASEAN: Partners For Peace and Development," published in the DISAM Journal of International Security Assistance Management, Department of the Army, Vol. 8, No. 1, Fall 1985.

[41]Buszynski, "THAILAND," p. 1045.

[42]This was said by a Thai foreign ministry spokesman interviewed in, "US to boost military aid to Thailand," Asian Defence Journal January 1986.

[43]Nathan, "US-THAI RELATIONS," p. 102.

VI. COMPARING PHYSICAL ASSETS PHILIPPINES VERSUS THAILAND

The American facilities in the Philippinnes are key components of the US presence in Southeast Asia and the Southwest Pacific, whose loss could severely limit our ability to project power and counter Soviet adventurism in the region. No other single base in Asia can duplicate the Philippine bases combination of strategic location, natural harbor, ship repair and logistics infrastructure, trained economical labor force, communications network, and realistic training sites. Should the US abandon its Philippine facilities, a US presence in the region will probably be maintained by projecting force from a combination of several other sites rather than one central point.

This chapter focusses on Thailand's physical assets and ability to replace some of the missions performed by the Philippine bases. It analyzes the broad missions performed by the Philippine facilities, lists the specific assets available in the Philippines and Thailand, compares and contrasts the two countries' abilities to perform the mission and recommends potential replacement sites in Thailand.

A. MISSION OF THE PHILIPPINE FACILITIES

The Philippine basing facilities are the "Jewels in the Crown" of America's Pacific bases. They serve a broad continuing US national interest in the Western Pacific. The facilities at Clark Air Base, Subic Bay Naval Base, and elsewhere in the Philippines provide a wide variety of services essential to maintaining the air and naval missions in the region:

- Provide the US Navy with the best protected, deep water harbor facilities in Southeast Asia;
- Provide the largest, most cost effective, and efficient ship repair facilities in the Pacific;
- Provide for comprehensive support for all operating forces in the area including communication, logistics, maintenance, training and personnel requirements;
- Provide major war reserve materiel storage for various contingencies;
- Provide a central location for rapid response which is only four flying hours or five sea days from Japan, Taiwan, Singapore and Guam and eight flying hours or nine sea days from the US base at Diego Garcia.

The bases are used as platforms from which US forces can accomplish several missions better than any other Western Pacific base:

- Provide continuous US air and naval presence in the Western Pacific and Indian Ocean regions without having to return to the US for periodic maintenance;
- Enable US air and naval commands to meet contingencies outside the Western Pacific region, such as the Persian Gulf, Arabian Sea, and the Middle East;
- To protect vital air-sea lanes of the Western Pacific region which are essential for the US and its allies;

- Form an integral part of a deterrent system that signals potential adversaries of US resolve to meet its commitments;

- Provide a visible manifestation of US power in an area of growing military and political interest to the Soviet Union;

- Provide vital worldwide command and control facilities;

- Act as an effective counterbalance in the Western Pacific and Indian Ocean to the growing military presence of the Soviet Union and its allies, and help maintain a balance of power in the region;

- Symbolize American political and military commitments to the region;

- Provide the regional states "breathing space" and protection from Soviet military expansion and that of its aggressive regional ally, Vietnam.[1]

B. US FACILITIES IN THE PHILIPPINES

The US has two major installations in the Philippines; Clark Air Force Base and Subic Naval Base, and a number of smaller ancillary installations. These perform many tasks in support of the US presence in Southeast Asia.

The Subic complex is the largest naval installation outside the US and the homeport of the US Seventh Fleet, comprised of 50 ships, 425 aircraft, and 5000 sailors and marines. Although only one submarine and one cruiser are homeported at Subic, all of the Seventh Fleet's ships use the facilities extensively. It has three major wharves which can berth every ship type, including the Navy's largest carriers.

Subic is invaluable to the Seventh Fleet and its marine amphibious force readiness, as virtually every aspect of naval warfare can be exercised in the operating areas nearby. The Zambales ranges, across Subic Bay, comprise one of the few areas in the Western Pacific which provide adequate terrain for amphibious training, ground maneuvers, and firing live ordnance by ships. Air combat training facilities are available at Binanga Bay and Tabones.

Subic also has the largest ship repair facilities in the Western Pacific and performs about 65 percent of ship repairs for the Seventh Fleet. Its four floating dry docks can accommodate ships up to 54,000 tons, excepting carriers and battleships. Its facilities can completely overhaul most Navy ships and can carry out emergency repairs at sea or port. The ship repair depot operates continuously, and its labor costs are the lowest in the Pacific.

Subic is the largest US Naval supply depot outside the US, with 175,000 square feet of storage space. It processes over 100,000 requisitions a month. The depot's freight piers handle about 1,000 container vans per month, and the fuel department processes over one million barrels of fuel each month. The fuel storage capacity at Subic is 110 million gallons and is unique in providing a 43 mile, ten-inch fuel pipeline to Clark. The naval magazine at Camayan Point encompasses 12,400 acres and can store 46,000 short tons of ammunition.

Cubi Point Naval Air Station is the Navy's most active overseas air station, averaging 15,000 landings and takeoffs per month and accommodating between 150-200 aircraft. It receives 800 tons of air freight and handles 3500 passengers per month. It has a POL storage capacity of 1.68 million gallons, an apron parking area of 313,000 square yards, and can park the entire aircraft complement of any carrier with room for other operational planes.

Cubi Point is one of only three air stations in the world where aircraft can be directly off-loaded from the carrier to the piers. This allows disabled aircraft to be easily moved ashore for repairs, as well as tailoring an airwing with the specific aircraft needed for a particular mission. Cubi Point's maintenance facilities are capable of depot level aircraft repair.

Cubi Point supports a patrol squadron of P-3 Orion aircraft conducting anti-submarine warfare patrols over the South China Sea and the Indian Ocean. It also hosts a fleet tactical support squadron which provides on-board delivery service to the carriers, and a fleet composite squadron which tows targets for surface and airborne gunnery exercises.

The Naval Communications station at San Miguel, about 25 miles from Subic is a primary communications station in the Western Pacific, providing tactical communications support for Seventh fleet operations and linking the fleet

to worldwide control facilities. The San Miguel facilities include two message centers, a microwave relay station, and a transmitter facility.

The missions performed by the Subic complex are diverse, unique, and important. The following is a summary of the Subic Bay facilities:

- 62,00 acres
- Deep water harbor
- 6000 feet dock space on three major wharves
- Ship repair facility (65% of Seventh Fleet Repair)
- Three floating dry docks (54,000 ton capacity)
- Supply depot- 175,000 Sq. ft. storage
- Fuel depot- 110 million gal. capacity
- 43 mi. fuel pipeline to Clark
- 9000 ft. X 200 ft. runway at Cubi Point
- Depot level repair of aircraft at Cubi Point
- Naval magazine, Camayan Point, 12,400 acres, 46,000 tons ammunition storage
- San Miguel Naval Communications center
- 8000 military personnel, 540 US civilians, 5500 dependents, 8500 Filipino employees
- 200 bed hospital/Naval Regional Medical Center[2]

Clark Air Force base, 50 miles northwest of Manila, is the largest US Air Force installation outside the United States. With a 10,500 X 150 ft. runway, it can be used by virtually all military aircraft (B-52 emergency only

because of width). It has 60,000 square yards of parking space and 79,000 sq. ft. of hangar space.

The major Air Force units located at Clark include the Third Tactical Fighter Wing, consisting of 48 F-4E Phantom II's and the 374th Tactical Airlift Wing made up of 16 C-130's and 3 C-9's. The F-4's possess the only permanent all-weather intercept capability in the Philippines, while the C-130's and C-9's provide airlift and aeromedical evacuation capability for the Pacific and Indian Oceans. Other aircraft include 11 F-5E Tiger II "aggressor" airplanes, 5 T-33A's, 2 CT-39's, and 5 H-3 search and rescue helicopters.

The Crow Valley weapons range at Clark is vital to the maintenance of combat readiness of all air units in the Pacific. The complex contains extensive bombing, gunnery and electronic warfare ranges, including simulated surface-to-air installations. These facilities make Clark the home of "Cope Thunder", the Pacific's version of the realistic "Red Flag" training program in the US. The battlefield realism provided through these training facilities is the best of its kind outside the United States.

Clark is also a superb logistic support base. It provides forward operating locations with major aircraft maintenance and repair services, including rebuilding engines and issuing spare parts. It can store 18 million

gallons of jet fuel and has over a million square feet of storage area for war readiness material. It can routinely handle 3,500 tons of cargo and 22,000 passengers daily. It has the greatest capacity for movement of personnel and materiel in the Western Pacific and is vital to the Pacific-Indian Ocean airlift system.

Clark is also the hub of north-south and east-west communications in the Western Pacific and Indian Ocean region. The facilities include a communications center, satellite terminal, automatic switching for global voice and telegraphic service, and high frequency radio facilities. It supports CINCPAC by providing voice and teletype alerting networks and airborne command post support.

Two auxiliary installations contibute to the mission. At Wallace Air Station, the USAF provides extensive radar coverage for the defense of the Philippines. It also conducts tactical air training, provides air-to-air refueling assistance, and launches and controls target drones in support of the Pacific Air Force's weapons system evaluation program. Camp John Hay, in the mountain city of Baguio, is a rest and recreation center for personnel from all services which plays an important role in maintaining their welfare and morale.[3]

The facilities at Clark, a vital part of the Pacific Air Force, may be summarized as follows:

- 10,500 X 150 ft. runway and parallel taxiway
- 60,000 sq. yds. of usable aircraft parking apron
- 79,00 sq. ft. of hangar space
- 370 bed hospital/USAF Regional Medical Center
- 48 Homebased F-4E/G's, 11 F-5E's, 5 T-33A's, 2 CT-39's, 16 C-130E/H's, 3 C-9A's, 5 H-3's
- Crow Valley target and threat simulation range[4]

The US facilities in the Philippines provide many important capabilities for American force projection and stategic defense in Southeast Asia. Their unique location and combination of assets cannot be duplicated by any other bases outside the US. However, this paper must now address what Thai assets might substitute for those in the Philippines.

C. PHYSICAL ASSETS IN THAILAND

Most of the military infrastructure in Thailand is a legacy of American involvement in Vietnam. Thailand has the most long, hard-surfaced runways in Southeast Asia Although it has few deep, natural harbors, several have been used for port calls by the US Navy recently. (See Figure 3 for an overview of Thailand) None of these facilities compare to those of the Clark/Subic military

complex, but they are assets which could be used if necessary.

Since an airfield is more easily replaced than a port, this study centers on four areas which could be used by American naval forces for port call/replenishment in a forward-based strategy: Bangkok, Sattahip, Songkhla, and Phuket/Phang Nga. Each area's navigational information, berthing and facilities, service and logistics, and ability to accommodate USAF military aircraft, is set forth.

1. Bangkok/Don Muang

Bangkok is one of Thailand's two major ports. Its port facilities are located on the Gulf of Thailand, 40 km (25 mi.) up the Menam Chao Phraya. The river channel is continually dredged to accommodate ships drawing up to 8.2 m (27 ft.). Ships of up to 172 m in length (565 ft) can navigate the river and turn without difficulty. Ships exceeding these limits may anchor 2 mi offshore in depths of 14m (46 ft.).

Bangkok has adequate berthing facilities, consisting of seven midstream berths for vessels no more than 172m (565 ft.) in length. Fuel must be delivered by barge as there are no pipelines on the pier. The port has good handling facilities:

- 11 mobile cranes (8-30 ton cap.)
- 12 quay cranes (3-5 ton cap.)
- 2 floating cranes (120 ton and 125 ton cap.)

- 175 forklift trucks (5,000-7850 lb.)
- 28 towing tractors (8,000-16,000 lb.)
- 3 tugboats (550-1,090 hp)
- 4 rope boats (1,000 hp)[5]

American Naval vessels visiting Bangkok estimate the port capacity to be four DD/FF type ships. The port has adequate supplies of fuel and water and a good transportation network of road, rail, and steamer to move cargo to and from ships. There is one privately owned dry dock capable of handling ships up to 109 m. (360 ft.) for minor ship and engine repairs.[6] The port of Bangkok is being improved. Additionally, the Royal Thai Navy is constructing another dockyard, Ft. Chula, near Bangkok which would provide better port facilities for American Naval vessels.

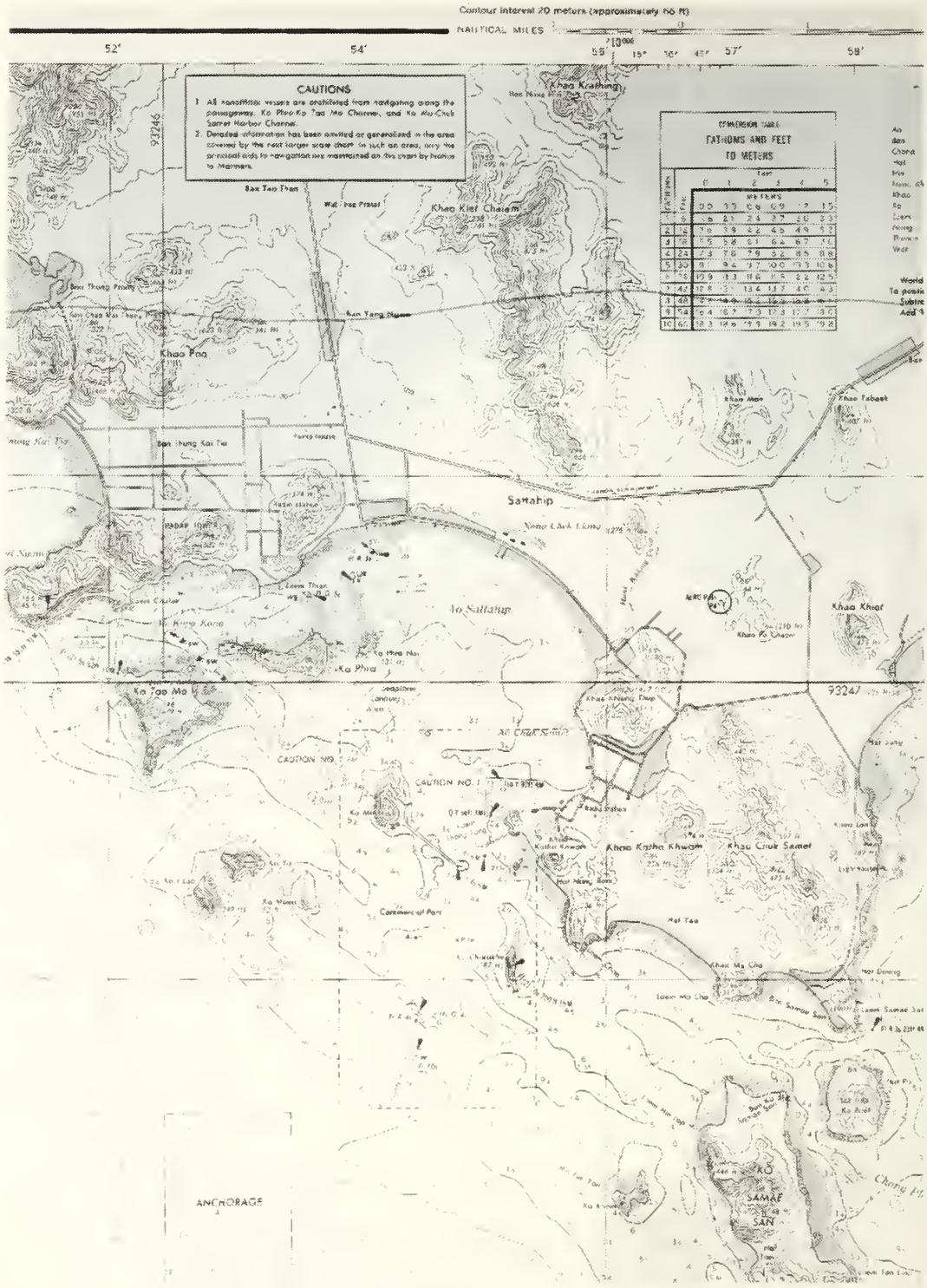
Bangkok's nearest airfield is Bangkok International Airport, also known as Don Muang Air Base, located 22.5 km (14 mi.) north of the city, and headquarters of the Royal Thai Air Force. It has two runways: 21R/03L which is 12,139 X 197 ft., and 03R/21L which is 9842 X 148 ft. This airport can handle any US military aircraft loaded to capacity. It has plentiful support equipment, POL, and ramp space. While collocation with a civilian field may present security problems, it is one of the finest airfields in Asia.[7]

Figure 3 Thailand

2. Sattahip/U-Taphao

The next potential port alternative is Sattahip, largest Royal Thai Naval Facility outside of Bangkok. Sattahip (Chuk Samet) is located on the east coast of the Gulf of Thailand, approximately 180 km (112 mi.) southeast of Bangkok. The port is encumbered by several reef-fringed islands within the bay and at the harbor entrance. (See Figure 4) The harbor is formed by a tanker pier connected to the shore by a pipeline trestle at the west side of the entrance and a 1/2 mile-long breakwater extending from Ko Mu island to protect the pier. A buoyed channel to the harbor has a measured (USS William Bates) minimum depth of 12.8m (42 ft.). Deep water anchorage is approximately 9 fathoms (54 ft.), and mud and sand provide good holding ground, but the anchorage is unprotected and choppy seas occasionally make small boat operations difficult.[8]

The deep water port of Sattahip can handle four cruisers. It has four 182.9m (600 ft.) berths, but has none for submarine berthing. Another small coastal harbor has a pier usable on two sides, one 510m (1,670 ft.) long, the other 502m (1,50 ft.) long. The port has three cranes (one automotive, two rail-guided) with a maximum capacity of 45 tons and no container capability. Three storage sheds, reported (USS Buchanan) in poor repair, provide an estimated capacity of 114,450 sq. ft. All POL and water services are available, some from the pier, most by



Source: Defense Mapping Agency

Figure 4 The Port of Sattahip

lighter. Transportation systems at the port of Sattahip are adequate. Most cargo is transported by road, as there is no rail service to the port area.[9]

Sattahip's nearest airfield is U-Taphao International, 11.2 km (7 mi.) away. Originally constructed to handle American B-52's and KC-135's during Vietnam era, it is perhaps the finest runway and ramp complex is Southeast Asia. U-Taphao has one runway 18/36, 11,500 X 200 ft., capable of handling any aircraft in the American inventory. It has a full range of POL services, support equipment, and a variety of instrument approaches for all weather operation.[10]

While some of the former American ramp and hangar facilities are in disrepair, U-Taphao is an excellent staging base for airlift operations, refueling tankers, fighter operations, and reconnaissance missions. It is used occasionally as a refueling stop for US Navy P-3 anti-submarine reconnaissance missions in the Indian Ocean.

3. Songkhla/Hat Yai

Songkhla is on the east coast of the Malay Peninsula, on the western littoral of the Gulf of Thailand. (See Figure 5) It is a natural harbor with a narrow channel which accommodates only vessels of less than 10 ft. draft. However, because of the gentle slope of the bottom offshore and relatively shallow depth (less than 20

fathoms) persisting well into the Gulf of Thailand, Songkhla could provide anchorage for unlimited ships, at varying distances from shore. The anchorage is not sheltered and the nearest major ship would be some four miles from the beach, six miles from the nearest pier.

Although the Royal Thai Navy maintains two small piers, they would be unusable by most American naval vessels. Three steel lighters, each with a capacity of 350 tons, and wooden cargo boats with a total capacity of 1700 tons, are available to load and unload cargo. Songkhla has no heavy lift facilities, dry dock nor repair facilities, and has only one storage warehouse of about 6000 sq. ft. It is served by a two-lane highway and a rail spur via Hat Yai, which ties into the mainline between Singapore and Bangkok. The port would require major construction before it could be used for more than an anchorage for American vessels.[11]

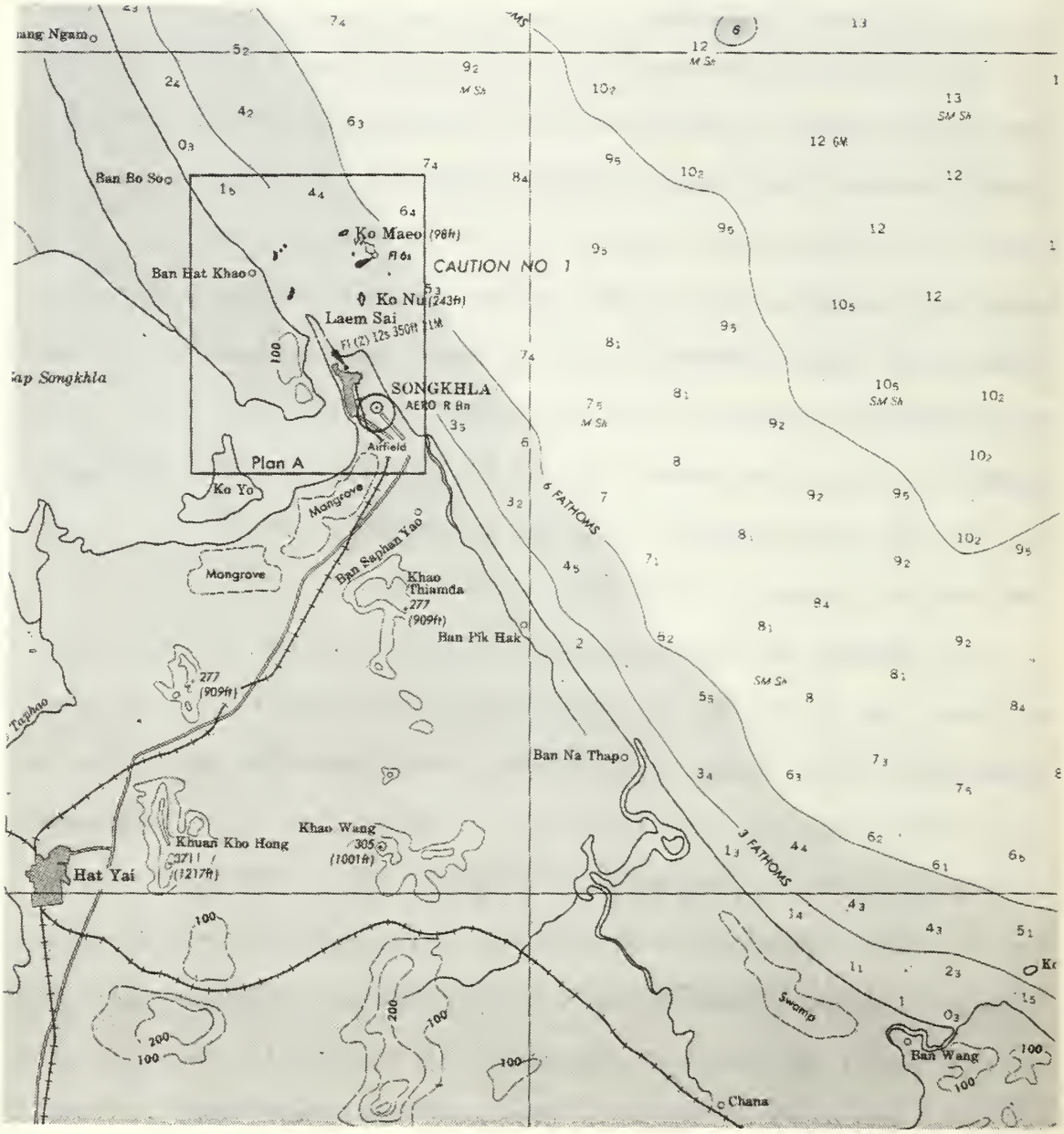
Two airfields service the Songkhla area: Songkhla Royal Thai Naval Airport, 3.2 km (2 mi.); and Hat Yai International, approximately 32 km (20 mi.). The Songkhla airfield has one concrete runway 13/31, 4,953 X 148 ft., handling small utility aircraft through C-130 cargo planes. Hat Yai airport has one runway 08/26, 10,006 X 148 ft., which supported USAF F-15's and could handle most aircraft provided its load bearing capacity is determined adequate.

Hat Yai has sufficient ramp space, POL services, and instrument landing systems to support limited operations.[12]

4. Phuket/Phang Nga

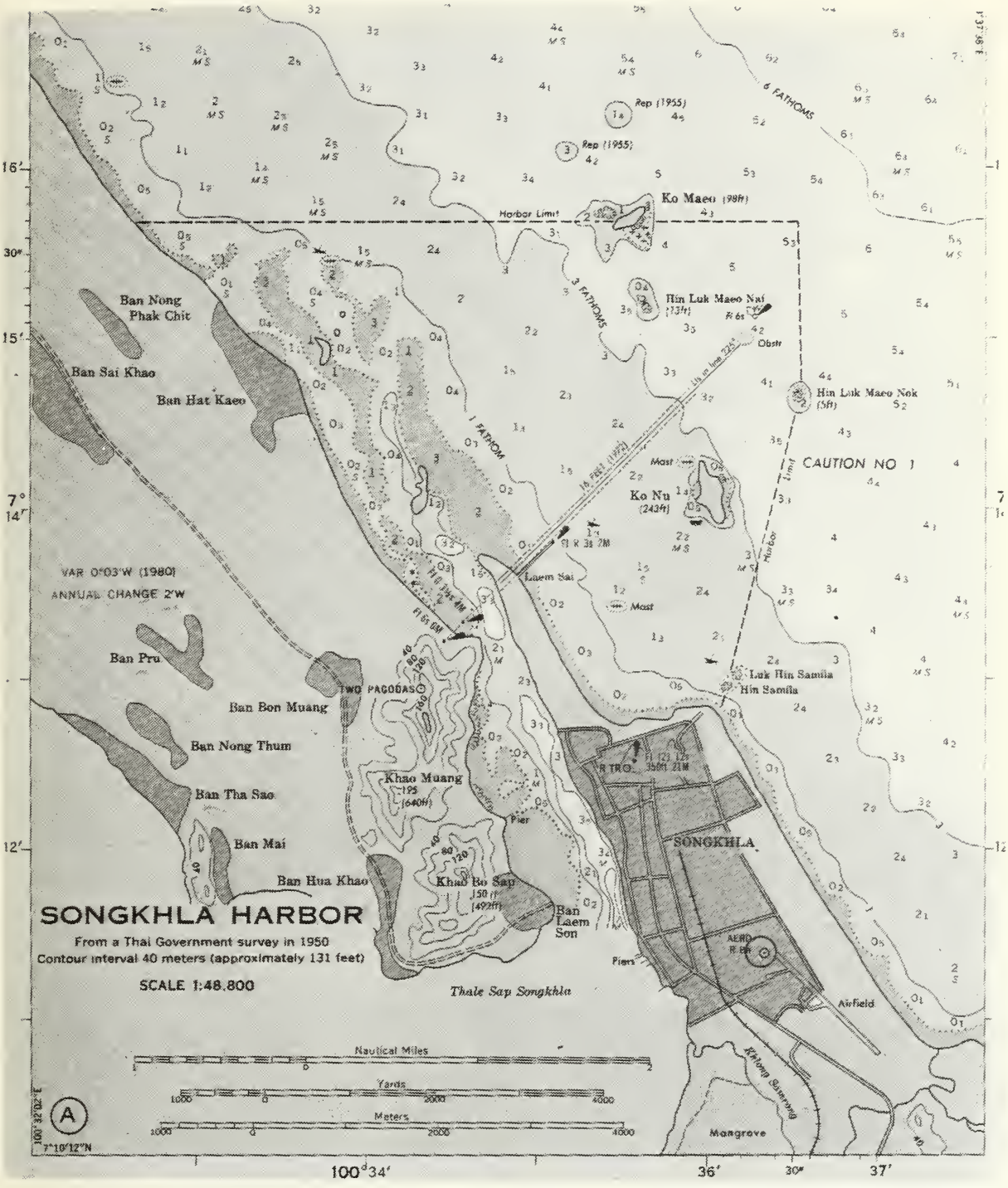
The Phuket Island/Phang Nga region of Thailand is the only potential port facility facing the Indian Ocean/Andaman Sea rather than the Gulf of Thailand. (See Figure 6) Located 390 air miles from Bangkok, Phuket is both tourist resort and tin mining center. The port is located on the southeast side of the island, and is fringed by a reef and several smaller islands. Pa Tong is a natural bay on the western side of Phuket Island. Phang Nga is located approximately 30 mi. northeast of Phuket on the western coast of the Malay peninsula.

Phuket is Thailand's principal tin exporting port, and has one privately owned pier 62.4m (205 ft) long with 9.6m (31.5 ft.) depth alongside. Anchorage for numerous deep-draft vessels is available in water 3-5 mi. northeast of the port up to depths of 15.2m (50 ft.). Phuket harbor has an adequate supply of POL and water, delivered by small lighters. One private crane with a 70 ton capacity and a mobile crane of unknown capacity are available for offloading cargo. The port can perform minor ship maintenance. Transportation from Phuket is by highway and bridge to the mainland, and by cargo ship.



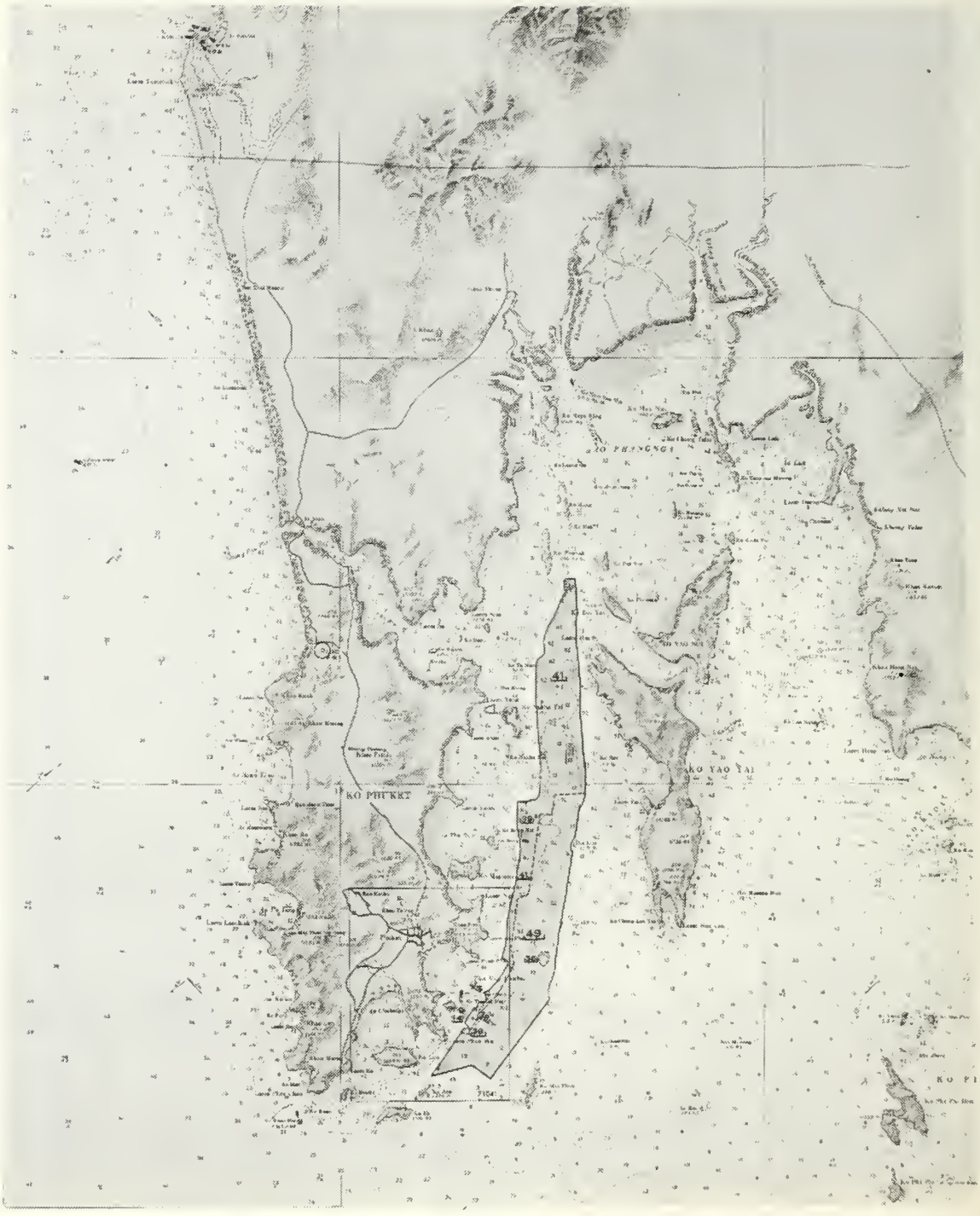
Source: Defense Mapping Agency

Figure 5 Songkhla



Source: Defense Mapping Agency

Figure 5 (con't) Songkhla Harbor



Source: Defense Mapping Agency

Figure 6 Phuket

Pa Tong is a natural bay with depths of up to 20m (65 ft.) and a mud/sand bottom which provides excellent holding. There are no piers, wharves, or services at Pa Tong, although supplies, fuel, and water can be delivered by lighter from Phuket. The USS Savannah, on a port visit in 1983, estimated Pa Tong could accommodate three destroyers, but did not recommend carrier operations.[13]

Phang Nga is a Thai naval and airbase being built with some US government assistance. Although little is published in open sources about the base, speculation points to a major staging base for US contingencies in the Strait of Malacca and Indian Ocean. It is also rumored as a site for US prepositioned war supplies.[14]

The major airport serving the region is Phuket International Airport. It has one runway 09/27 8200 X 148 ft., stressed to handle Royal Thai Airlines Boeing 747's. Although most USAF aircraft, except B-52's, could use the field, major construction would be required to lengthen the runway and add ramp space before it could support extended American operations.[15]

D. THE PHILIPPINES AND THAILAND: A COMPARISON

Thailand's physical assets are inferior to those of the Clark/Subic complex. It would take substantial time and money to duplicate the Philippine facilities. In June 1983, Admiral Long, testifying before the House

Subcommittee on Asian and Pacific Affairs, estimated the cost of replacing the Philippine bases at $3 billion to $4 billion. More recent studies place that cost as high as $10 billion.[16] It is very unlikely that the US Congress would fund such development. If Thailand's facilities were to be used as is, or with minimum improvements, some of the vital missions performed by the Philippine bases could be accomplished. Table 1 summarizes those general missions, and compares Thai and Philippine abilities to perform those tasks.

If Thailand's bases are used for little more than limited forward basing and prepositioned supply depots, response time to various locations becomes a critical issue. The Thai locations have an advantage in responding to the Persian Gulf, while the Philippine locations can respond more quickly to East and Southeast Asia. However, if the US leaves the Philippines, it will most likely fall back to other positions closer to Northeast Asia, mitigating Thailand's disadvantage. Figure 7 shows the relative location of various action points, and Table 2 summarizes response times to those points.

The physical assets, maintenance and logistics infrastructures, and training ranges in the Philippines eclipse those of Thailand. But potential Thai bases compare favorably to Philippine facilities in their ability

TABLE 1
Mission Capability

Mission	Clark/ Subic	Bangkok	Sattahip	Songkhla	Phuket
Presence	Exc.	Sat.	Sat.	Sat.	Sat.
Contingencies	Exc.	Sat.	Sat.	Insuf.	Insuf.
Readiness	Exc.	Sat.	Sat.	Insuf.	Insuf.
Harbor	Exc.	Insuf.	Sat.	Insuf.	Insuf.
Maintenance	Exc.	Marg.	Marg.	Insuf.	Insuf.
Response to					
Gulf/I.O.	Sat.	Sat.	Sat.	Sat.	Exc.
Key Straits	Sat.	Sat.	Sat.	Exc.	Exc.
Mainland SEA	Sat.	Exc.	Exc.	Exc.	Sat.
N. E. Asia	Sat.	Marg.	Marg.	Marg.	Insuf.
C 3 Function	Exc.	Marg.	Insuf.	Insuf.	Insuf.
Logistics	Exc.	Sat.	Sat.	Insuf.	Insuf.
Training	Exc.	Marg.	Marg.	Marg.	Insuf.
War Reserve	Exc.	Sat.	Sat.	Marg.	Marg.
Counter USSR	Exc.	Sat.	Sat.	Sat.	Marg.
Show Resolve	Exc.	Exc.	Exc.	Sat.	Sat.
Runways*	All	All	All	Some	Some

Exc.= Excellent ability to perform given mission
Sat.= Satisfactory ability to perform given mission
Marg.= Marginal ability to perform given mission
Insuf.= Insufficient ability to perform given mission
* Runways marked can support all US military aircraft, those marked some can accommodate all but B-52's.

Figure 8 Radius of Action Points for Response Times

TABLE 2

APPROXIMATE SAILING DISTANCES/TIMES, FLYING DISTANCES/TIMES

To: Pt. A Radius of Action Point Persian Gulf--15 N. 60 E.

From	Sea Dist. (n.mi.)	Sea Days (nearest 1/2 day)	Fly Dist. (n. mi.)	Fly Time (nearest 1/2 hr.)
Subic	4300	12	4250	14
Sattahip	3800	10 1/2	2750	9
Songkhla	3500	9 1/2	2600	8 1/2
Phuket	2500	7	2400	8

To: Pt. B Radius of Action Point Indian Ocean--Diego Garcia

Subic	3500	9 1/2	3500	11 1/2
Sattahip	3100	8 1/2	2100	7
Songkhla	2800	8	1950	6 1/2
Phuket	1800	5	1800	6

To: Pt. C Radius of Action Point S. China Sea--15 N. 110 E.

Subic	500	1 1/2	450	1 1/2
Sattahip	1050	3	1025	3 1/2
Songkhla	850	2 1/2	900	3
Phuket	1650	4 1/2	1050	3 1/2

To: Pt. D Radius of Action Point N. E. Asia--Okinawa

Subic	875	2 1/2	850	3
Sattahip	2200	6	2150	7
Songkhla	2000	5 1/2	2050	7
Phuket	2800	8	2200	7 1/2

Sailing time based on 15 knot speed of advance
Flight time based on 300 knot ground speed
For Diego Garcia-- From Sattahip/Songkhla transit Malacca Strait, Subic transit Sunda Strait
Sattahip and Bangkok are roughly equal in times and distances

to show resolve, display the American flag, respond to crises, and counter the Soviet presence. A rebasing concept using Thailand cannot accomplish the missions of the Philippine facilities as economically or efficiently. But if the US must leave the Clark/Subic complex, Thailand has sufficient physical assets for a forward basing and war reserve material area.

E. ALTERNATE BASING RECOMMENDATIONS

Two courses are available for a Thai rebasing concept based on budget considerations. If funding is obtained for construction, the Phuket/Phang Nga area offers several advantages. If a minimum cost option must be approached, the Sattahip/U-Taphao area provides readily available assets.

The Phuket region has several clear basing advantages over other regions in Thailand. First, the remote location provides a low-key presence and minimizes anti-American attitudes in Thailand. Phuket offers immediate access to the Indian Ocean and the Strait of Malacca, and significantly reduces response time to Diego Garcia and the Persian Gulf. It offers an excellent refueling stop for aircraft deploying to the Western Pacific, and is close enough to mainland Southeast Asia to deter Soviet and Vietnamese aggression, yet far enough from the Kampuchean border to avoid being overrun by a blitzkrieg invasion from

the SRV. It is close to shipyards in Singapore for major repairs. These advantages cannot be realized without a substantial financial investment in airport expansion, and harbor construction.

Sattahip/U-Taphao provides adequate capabilities with mimimum investment, and the region has sufficient anchorage, supplies and storage capability be a forward base. U-Taphao Air Base is an excellent staging area for tactical operations, air refueling operations, and reconnaissance missions. It has several shortcomings: proximity to the Kumpuchean border makes it hostage to surprise invasion; proximity to Bangkok subjects it to potential anti-basing sentiment; and significantly longer response time to WestPac contigencies.

While Thailand cannot substitute for America's significant facilities at Clark and Subic, it can provide anchorage and replenishment areas for the US Navy. It can also serve to mount aerial operations in the Western Pacific and Indian Ocean areas. But it can be used by American forces only if Washington successfully negotiates with Bangkok for basing rights.

Chapter VI Endnotes

[1]Several sources were used. Primary source is U.S., Congress, Committee on Foriegn Affairs, United States-Philippines Relations and the New Base and Aid Agreement. Hearings before a subcommittee of the House Committee on Foreign Affairs. 98th Cong., 1st sess., 1983, pp. 31-37. An expanded version is provided by S. Bilveer in , "U.S. Military Bases in the Philippines," in Asian Defence Journal, January, 1986, p. 27.

[2]House, Committee on Foreign Affairs, U.S.-Philippines Relations, pp. 9-12. Bilveer, "U.S. Military Bases in the Philippines," p. 26. "U.S. Military Bases in the Philippines- Strategy, Politics, and Contigencies," a research report submitted to the Industrial College of the Armed Forces, National Defense University, by Stephen H. Baker and Ross A. Word, p.5.

[3]House, Committee on Foreign Affairs, U.S.-Philippines Relations, pp. 7-8. Bilveer, "U.S. Military Bases in the Philippines," pp. 26-27. Baker and Word, "U.S. Military Bases in the Philippines- Strategy, Politics, and Contigencies," p.4.

[4]Baker and Word, "U.S. Military Bases in the Philippines- Strategy, Politics, and Contigencies," p.4.

[5]Several sources provide this data: U.S. Naval Hydrographic Office, Sailing Directions for the South China Sea and Gulf of Thailand, Publication 161, 3rd Ed. (Washington: Government Printing Office, 1985), pp. 174-176 (Hereafter cited as Sailing Directions, Pub. 161); U.S. Defense Mapping Agency Naval Port Directory, pp.H2-1, H2-2 (Cited as Port Directory); and Lloyd's Ports of the World 1983, Lloyd's of London Press Ltd., United Kingdom, Australia and Pacific Islands section (Cited as Lloyd's Ports of the World 1983).

[6]Sailing Directions, Pub. 161, pp. 174-176; Port Directory, pp. H2-1, H2-2, Lloyd's Ports of the World 1983.

[7]Information on the airfield from Defense Mapping Agency Aerospace Center, DOD Flight Information Publication (Terminal, 26 Sep 1985, p. 37) and (Enroute Supplement, 16 Jan 1986, p. B-15). Future references are abbreviated FLIP (Terminal and Enroute Supplement).

[8]Sailing Directions, pub. 161, pp. 169-171; Port Directory, pp.H1-1 - H1-4; and Lloyd's Ports of the World 1983.

[9]Sailing Directions, pub. 161, pp. 169-171; Port Directory, pp.H1-1 - H1-4; and Lloyd's Ports of the World 1983.

[10]FLIP (Terminal, 26 Sep 1985, p. 339) and (Enroute Supplement, 16 Jan 1986, p. B-206).

[11]Sailing Directions, pub. 161, p. 182; Port Directory, pp. H5-1 - H5-5; and Lloyd's Ports of the World 1983.

[12]FLIP (Terminal, 26 Sep 1985, p. 103) and (Enroute Supplement, 16 Jan 1986, p. B-64).

[13]Sailing Directions for the Strait of Malacca and Sumatra, Publication 174, 3rd Ed. (Washington: Government Printing Office, 1985), pp. 3-9; Port Directory, pp. H3-1 - H3-3 and H6-1 - H6-4; and Lloyd's Ports of the World 1983.

[14]See G. Jacobs, "Thailand's Armed Forces, Part 2: The Air Force and Navy," in Asian Defence Journal, May 1985 p. 20.

[15]FLIP (Terminal, 26 Sep 1985, p. 272) and (Enroute Supplement, 16 Jan 1986, p. B-150).

[16]House, Committee on Foreign Affairs, U.S.-Philippines Relations, p. 38. Baker and Word, "U.S. Military Bases in the Philippines- Strategy, Politics, and Contigencies," p. 49.

VII. POLITICS OF NEGOTIATIONS

Historically, Thailand and the United States have cooperated to satisfy mutual needs. If the US must leave its Philippine facilities, successful negotiations for Thai basing rights should be governed by mutual interests between both parties. With perceptions of mutual interest, negotiations do not present insurmountable barriers.

The American use of Thai military facilities must be viewed by both countries as the intersection of two convergent security policies. The United States needs bases in Thailand to continue an active presence in Southeast Asia; to protect the sealines of communication and strategic chokepoints; and to counter Soviet activity in the region. Thailand needs an American presence to guarantee its security against Vietnamese invasion, and as a counterweight to Soviet power in the region.

This chapter addresses American negotiations for Thai bases by: showing that US basing is a logical and necessary extension of both countries' security links; anticipating possible Thai reaction to US basing initiatives; convincing Thailand of the benefits accruing from the return of US forces, and countering arguments of a Thai anti-base

movement; and, finally, anticipating the reactions of other regional actors.

A. CURRENT US-THAI SECURITY LINKAGE

The Soviet-Vietnamese threat to Thailand caused the US to reassure its ally by reemphasizing previous security agreements; to establish new links; and to begin a series of annual military exercises. A low-key military complex in Thailand should be viewed as a logical outgrowth of current security foundations, which satisfies the defense interests of both parties.

Two agreements provide the foundation of US-Thai security policy. The first US-Thai link is a resurrected SEATO Pact treaty commitment: in it, each party pledges to act to meet the common danger of aggression against the other parties, within its constitutional processes. A separate "Understanding" signed by the US further restricts the threat to "Communist aggression." The 1962 Rusk-Thanat Communique set forth the security obligations of both countries under the Manila Pact as individual and collective. (see Appendix) It is not a tripwire alliance, but it reinforces Washington's commitment to Bangkok.[1] Both the Carter and Reagan administrations reassured Bangkok that Washington would honor this treaty if Thailand is attacked.

Since the Vietnamese incursions across the Thai border, the US and Thailand have increased their security linkages. The two governments have exchanged a series of high-level diplomatic visits including visits to Bangkok of Secretary of State Schultz (July 1985); former Secretary of State Kissinger (November 1985); Assistant Secretary of State Wolfowitz (December 1985); and Assistant Secretary of Defense Armitage (February 1985). In October 1985, Thai Foreign Minister Sitthi visited Secretary of Defense Weinberger in New York. This flurry of diplomatic activity resulted in a logistics Memorandum of Understanding (MoU), signed by Prime Minister Prem and Secretary Weinberger on 3 October 1985.[2]

> The document is the culmination of high-level negotiations between Thai and U.S. officials which began early this year and is a further development in the 35-year old Thai-U.S. military cooperation agreement.[3]

The MoU establishes a framework to give Thailand direct access to the US logistics system; paves the way for discussion of a future US war reserves stockpile in the region; and deals with "defense articles and services" to be provided by Thailand to the US.[4] In effect, the MoU formalises the US guarantee of quick resupply. Although it forces Thailand to be dependent on US support, one Bangkok editorial stated, "it is true that in the final analysis Thailand will have to rely on herself but it is always helpful to have another arrow in the quiver."[5]

Thailand's request for the establishment of a war reserve stockpile within its borders shows its desire for increased US involvement in Thailand. The reciprocal nature of the MoU indicates Bangkok is willing to return the favor to Washington. The memorandum even references possible Thai aid to the US in wartime, including refit and maintenance of US ships and aircraft.

As both governments move toward closer security links, the next logical extension of cooperation is US use of Thai bases as part of its forward strategy. US military equipment would be prepositioned for rapid transfer to Thailand during emergencies, answering Bangkok's request for a war reserve stockpile. Washington would gain a forward deployment area to replace the Philippine facilities. Clearly, both governments gain mutual benefits from a basing agreement. Negotiation should emphasize that US use of Thai facilities is simply the culmination of increased cooperation efforts by both countries.

B. ANTICIPATING THAI REACTION TO US BASING

The Philippine presidential crisis brought the issue of US use of Thai bases into the Thai political arena. Thailand's initial reaction to US basing initiatives would be negative. An editorial in the Thai press in 1980, after the Vietnamese invasion of Kampuchea but before Vietnamese border incursions into Thailand, advised the Thai

government to be cautious with respect to American friendship.

> Thailand must be careful if it is approached by the United States. History tells us that too close relations with anyone can bring only bad consequences. We would like to say that Thailand is willing to do anything appropriate in cooperating with friendly countries to defend our common interests. But we do not want to let history repeat itself by allowing a foreign military base to be built in our country.[6]

But the Thais are pragmatists. As the Philippine crisis intensified, official Thai statements softened. When asked, in November 1984, about the US use of Thai bases Interior Minister General Sitthi Chirarot said, "everyone concerned must look at the issue very thoroughly if it becomes necessary for the United States to reestablish its bases in Thailand."[7] Another article in a Bangkok magazine welcomed increased US-Thai cooperation but still emphasized caution.

> We could say that for Thailand and the United States to become close allies again is a good thing because it cannot be denied that having an ally benefits a small country like Thailand as long as the alliance is based on equality and care is exercised to ensure that we are not taken advantage of excessively.[8]

Former Secretary of State Kissinger visited Bangkok in November 1985, to, among other purposes, poll Thai leaders on US use of Thai bases. Notable in the report of his visit was the absence of any rhetoric or admonition for Thai caution in the matter.

> Kissinger . . . said clearly that the United States will consult with Thailand if its bases have to be moved out of the Philippines. Whether or not they will be moved to

> Thailand cannot be overlooked. In any event . . . the United States is solicting views of Thai people in all levels about the possible return of U.S. bases to Thailand.[9]

Thailand's pragmatic opinion has apparently slowly changed to match political realities. One Thai ministry source countered criticism that the US-Thai arms stockpile plan would violate Thai independence and sovereignty with this realistic appeal,

> . . . [the plan] is nothing we can reject, as there have already been violations of Thailand's national sovereignty in which losses of Thai lives and property were reported. Thailand cannot accept that and must adopt measures for self-defense . . . . If others were to fire on us and we had no weapons, we would die. In a war situation, therefore, we must have weapons.[10]

Still, the most recent statements of the Thai foreign ministry indicate the Thais would oppose US basing initiatives.

> Recent discussions in Bangkok about offering a substitute location for US installations have been rejected as a political liability. According to Thai Foreign Minister Siddhi Savetsila: "We want modern weapons, not bases."[11]

The United States must anticipate this reaction from the Thais and develop a strategy that emphasizes the benefits to Thailand of an American basing agreement, while stressing the importance of an American regional presence.

Predicting Thai reaction to US basing initiatives is difficult. As long as the US presence in the Philippines appears secure, the Thais will reject the idea of US facilities in their country. However, if the US is forced to give up its Philippine bases, Thai opinion might change.

Given the choice between no US presence in Southeast Asia and American use of Thai bases, the Thai government would probably grudgingly acquiesce to American involvement.

C. COSTS AND BENEFITS TO THAILAND

The US can increase the probability of successful negotiations for Thai basing rights by presenting a convincing list of benefits to Thailand, while countering possible anti-basing arguments. Two primary benefits derive from a US presence in Thailand: increased military and economic assistance programs which would accompany a base agreement; and the economic "trickle down" from employment of Thai labor and infusion of GI dollars. Conversely, the US must be prepared to counter Thai claims that the US presence causes a loss of independence and sovereignty; places Bangkok at risk for nuclear attack; serves only American national interests, not those of Thailand; and US troops on Thai soil have a negative impact on Thai society.

The United States would increase military and economic aid to Thailand as part of a bases agreement. Americans have been reluctant to use the word "rent" to describe the five year, $900 million aid package promised the Philippines as part of the current bases agreement. US negotiators should not hesitate to point out to the Thais

that the US places an economic value on the use of Thai bases.

According to Congressional testimony, Thailand must spend approximately $350 million dollars annually for military hardware to replace outdated items and to move forward in weapons procurement. The Thai budget can cover military capital expenditures of only $200 million. Simple arithmetic predicts a $150 million annual shortfall in Thailand's defense budget.[12]

The Royal Thai Air Force has been forced to rigorous austerity to purchase 12 F-16A fighters from the United States.

> According to Thai press reports, the Air Force is implementing a 10% across-the-board spending cut to meet the expense [of the F-16s]. The savings would come from suspending new recruitment, curtailing pay hikes, and cutting overseas inspection trips.[13]

A promise of increased aid is a persuasive argument for those negotiating a US basing agreement, in light of these fiscal constraints. But military aid is not the only benefit of US presence.

The aid package signed in conjunction with the Philippine base agreement called for $475 million of the $900 million to be economic aid.[14] Negotiators can stress to the Thai government that economic aid will increase with a US basing agreement. This aid not only benefits the economy, it diffuses the arguments of those who oppose the strength of the military and its demands on the economy.

The Thai student movement can be expected to oppose an American presence in Thailand. If the students felt US "rent money" could be put to use helping the poor, they might be mollified.[15]

Another benefit from US presence in Thailand is the economic boost provided by the salaries to Thai laborers, and the spending habits of servicemen on liberty. One study of the Phillipines places the annual salaries to Philippine civilians at $98 million; it claims off-duty personnel spend $68 million on the local economy. Considering the costs of local purchase, utilities and other sources, the study estimates the Philippines gains $364 million per year above its external aid. While the value to Thailand of a smaller American contingent might not approach this figure, it is nonetheless significant.[16]

The United States can expect at least four principal objections to American basing: infringement on Thai sovereignty; that the bases serve only US interests; that the American presence attracts nuclear attack; and that US troops in Thailand have a negative impact on Thai social values and customs. Former Philippine Ambassador to the United States Salvador P. Lopez listed the first three objections as major reasons for Philippine anti-bases sentiment.[17] The fourth objection was voiced by the anti-US Thai student movement which led to American

withdrawal from Thailand in 1976.[18] The infringement of sovereignty is a critical issue.

Negotiation over sovereignty must stress that the US has always treated Thailand as an equal and an independent actor. The Philippine situation is different because it was a former colony of the United States, and suffers from a colonial mentality. The American team must point to England, Japan, Germany, Spain, and Turkey, NATO countries whose sovereignty and independence does not suffer from an American presence, and be quick to offer conditions to the base agreement which place US interests secondary to Thai sovereignty.

Many provisions of the 1979 Philippine base agreement must anchor a US-Thai agreement.

- Acknowledge that the bases are Thai military bases used by the US; install Thai base commanders.
- Use only enough land and facilities necessary to perform the mission.
- Fly the Thai flag alone or in a position of honor with the American flag.
- Designate specific areas for US use, command, and control.
- Establish a 5-year review process.
- Set forth powers and responsibilities of Thai Base and American Facility Commanders.
- Establish a Thai role in customs, immigration, and quarantine procedures.[19]

A strict status of forces agreement subjecting off-duty American personnel to Thai laws would also allay feelings

of sovereign infringement. If the US respects Thai sovereignty from the beginning of negotiations, it may never become a problem.

Several arguments counter the issue of American bases serving only US interests. The threat of a Vietnamese invasion of Thailand may be remote. But, unlike the lack of any external threat perceived by the Philippines, Thailand is a "frontline state" facing a clear and present danger. American facilities in Thailand complicate the Vietnamese decision to invade. A US presence would serve as a deterrent even if American troops were not committed to a "tripwire" agreement.

Thai interests also would be served by using the bases as war reserve depots. The Thais would get the military stockpile they seek because American equipment would be instantly available for transfer to the Thai armed forces. The presence of an established airlift logistics center would reduce delays between delivery of supplies and equipment to the base and their arrival at the front lines. By using a Thai base as a base of operations for inflight air refueling, USAF aircraft could be deployed directly to Thailand avoiding time-consuming refueling stops. Should the Vietnamese commit their forces to an invasion of Thailand, the early hours of the war would be critical; fast, efficient resupply best serves Thai interests.

Another anti-base argument is that an American presence invites nuclear attack. Because the US must continue its policy of neither confirming nor denying the presence of nuclear weapons aboard its ships, the Thai facilities could not be kept a "nuclear free zone." The "nuclear magnet" argument has some validity, but the issue could be diffused by locating the American facilities as far as possible from Bangkok.

The Bangkok area and lower reaches of the Menam Chao Phraya valley, like Luzon where the American facilities are located, contain most of Thailand's population, industry, and government. A nuclear strike on American bases in Luzon threatens Philippine survival; a similar strike on American facilities based near Bangkok would have the same effect.

However, by establishing US facilities in remote locations such as Songkhla, or Phuket Island, any nuclear attack on these facilities would pose no threat to Bangkok. This is the best way to alleviate Thai fears of nuclear war. Initiatives toward a remote American location could prevent the threat of nuclear attack on Thailand from becoming a major objection.

The final anti-base objection is the legacy of former US troops on Thai soil. The American return to Thailand must stress that any negative impact can be minimized

through reduced numbers of troops, remote locations, and restricted "R&R" visits to Bangkok.

The negative influence of American GIs on foreign soil has been a problem since the US first sent its troops abroad. American military personnel in Thailand during the Vietnam era left images of decadence, drunkeness, prostitution, and illegitmate children. It led to bitter complaints by the radical student movement of 1973, which contributed to the overthrow of the government and ensured withdrawal of American forces from Thailand.

> The radical students also attacked the U.S. presence from a social and cultural perspective. The arrival of so many American GIs had corrupted the Thai people, they felt, infusing Thais with their decadent social values . . . . The U.S. presence was identified . . . as the primary cause of "the rotten Thai society in which we are now living, one with hired wives, prostitutes and half breed children of all colors."[20]

The impact of American troops in a rebasing scheme would be less than that of Vietnam through reduced numbers. At the height the Vietnam conflict, nearly 50,000 US troops were based in Thailand. Thousands more used Bangkok as an "R&R" location. As many as 15,000 US service personnel were on leave or duty in Bangkok at any one time.[21] Those numbers inevitably had a significant impact.

If Thailand becomes a link in a restructured Southeast Asian presence, US troops could number substantially less than 10,000. Nearly all the US Air Force needs can be served by skeleton staff and maintenance organizations and

flight crews on temporary duty. The Navy needs Thailand for refueling and replenishment, not "homeporting". Washington can reassure Bangkok that fewer US troops will not have the same negative impact on Thai society as in the 1970s.

The impact of American forces can also be reduced by establishing American facilities in remote locations. Keeping the bases far from Bangkok would reduce their visibility among the majority of students, bureaucrats and other informed members of the Thai public. It is American strategic presence that is needed, not a highly visible "white fleet." Therefore, the US forces in a remote location provide what one author has called, "A low-key approach . . . with a high profile, and a velvet glove with a big stick."[22]

Finally, the impact of American GIs could be reduced by restricting "R&R" and leaves in Bangkok. This might prevent the resurgence of the enormous strip of bars and massage parlors that made up the New Phetburi Road district of Bangkok in the '70s.[23] Recent studies show the US Navy is capable of maintaining a lower profile on liberty. The Navy is making an effort to lower the profile of sailors in San Diego, one of the largest "homeports" in the world. "The installations remain but, sailors in uniform seem to be vanishing from downtown areas, along with the honky-tonks where so many spent their off-duty hours."[24]

Problems of American troops on Thai soil can be minimized by taking more responsibility for the behavior of our servicemen.

Thai reluctance to US basing initiatives can be overcome only by stressing the benefits to Thailand of a properly negotiated agreement. Thailand could gain increases in military and economic assistance and a boost to its economy from "GI dollars." Emphasizing Thai sovereignty and mutual interests in the negotiations, the American negotiators may prevent the major objections of an anti-bases coalition from becoming insurmountable issues. The US will gain basing rights in Thailand only if the Thais perceive benefits to their national interest. American planners must also anticipate the reactions of the other regional actors to a US-Thai bases agreement.

D. ANTICIPATING REACTION OF OTHER REGIONAL ACTORS

The last consideration in the politics of negotiation for American bases in Thailand is the reaction of other nations to a US presence on mainland Southeast Asia. This section anticipates the reaction of China, ASEAN, and the Soviet-Vietnamese bloc to an American base in Thailand.

The People's Republic of China would likely show little public reaction to a base agreement. The Chinese would probably neither praise nor comdemn the agreement, although their rhetoric opposes foreign bases on any nation's soil.

If the Thais support Chinese policies concerning Kampuchea, the Chinese would privately welcome an American presence in Thailand as a counterweight to the Soviet bases in Vietnam. The Chinese have approved US forces in the Philippines for this reason, and can be assumed to take nearly the same position with Thailand: ". . . China support[s] the US military presence in the Philippines . . . because this presence is seen as the only credible countenance to the expanding Soviet military power."[25]

During the 1983 House hearings concerning the US-Philippines Bases agreement, Assistant Secretary of Defense Armitage stated, ". . . having had discussions with the Chinese, that because of Vietnam's attempt in the Chinese eyes to flank China, China finds our presence in the Philippines . . . reassuring."[26] This statement infers Chinese support for an American basing scenario in Thailand.

But both the US and Thailand must realize that China views itself as a strong regional power. American bases must avoid competition with Chinese aid to, and influence in, Thailand, but rather serve to complement it. If the Chinese sense a decline in their regional influence due to an overbearing American policy, they may well renew clandestine support of the Communist Party of Thailand and withdraw support against Vietnamese invasion. The Chinese attitude toward American presence would be one of, "Let the

Americans worry about the Soviets, while we deal with the Vietnamese."

If the Americans can convince the Chinese that they have no desire to undermine Beijing's policy, the Chinese will tacitly support a Thai basing scenario. Beijing will abstain from a public vote on the issue, but the secret ballot would favor a US presence. The ASEAN position on a US-Thai basing agreement is similar to the Chinese, but for slightly different reasons.

Although the ASEAN nations will not give immediate, unanimous support to a US-Thai basing scenario, they will eventually acquiesce to a US presence. Initial objections will be based on doubt over US intentions, the violation of the ZOPFAN concept, and differing threat perceptions of the individual ASEAN states.

The ASEAN states may question US interests in the region. They share a concern with the US over the expansion of Soviet naval power in the region, but feel that America is more concerned with countering the Soviet threat than promoting regional security, "From the Southeast Asian point of view, the U.S. greatly over-emphasizes the Soviet threat and attributes far too much of the responsibility for . . . global troubles to the USSR."[27]

The United States must therefore convince the ASEAN states that its concern for regional security is paramount.

It must show that promoting a strong, capitalist Southeast Asia is a policy goal, not simply a by-product of attempts at Soviet containment. ASEAN trust in US commitment to the region will directly affect the reaction to a US-Thai basing agreement.

The second factor controlling ASEAN reaction is the regional vision of a Zone of Peace, Freedom, and Neutrality (ZOPFAN.) Even though Vietnamese dependence on Soviet assistance and the occupation of Kampuchea have postponed the idea, ZOPFAN is still an important pipe-dream for ASEAN. An American force in Thailand, however small, only delays the hope of a free, non-aligned Southeast Asia. Malaysia is now the leading ASEAN proponent for declaring Southeast Asia a nuclear-weapons free zone. The pragmatic ASEAN nations realize the need for a US presence to balance Soviet power. "Malaysian officials echoed . . . a view that despite Zopfan, 'the region needed protection [by the Western powers] in view of the Soviet build-up.'"[28] Because the ASEAN states need US protection, they will shelve their hopes for a neutral zone and tacitly support an American presence in Thailand. The final barrier preventing enthusiastic approval by ASEAN is the differing perception of regional threat between the individual nations.

While all the ASEAN states oppose Soviet power in the region, and realize the US presence is a necessary counterweight to Moscow, Malaysia and Indonesia fear the

power and intentions of China more than any other regional actor. Both countries had bitter experiences with Chinese-inspired insurgencies and overseas Chinese populations. The US involvement in Southeast Asia can appease ASEAN only by serving as a regional balancer between China, Vietnam, and the Soviet Union.

> On balance, though, U.S. and ASEAN interests converge in a compromise status for China: sufficient weakness to preclude an independent and aggressive military posture, but sufficient strength to resist Moscow and inhibit Hanoi.[29]

The United States can contribute to a favorable ASEAN reaction to a US-Thai basing by being sensitive to the problems of ASEAN states. Their desire for non-alignment must be respected, but they will acquiesce to a Thai-American solution. Singapore's Prime Minister Lee Kuan Yew said in December 1985, "If the U.S. has no bases in Subic Bay or Clark Air Field to balance the Soviet use of Cam Ranh Bay in Vietnam, the security position of the Asia-Pacific region would be different."[30]

The other ASEAN nations will also see a US presence in Thailand as being better than an American force in their own countries. The initial ASEAN reaction may be guarded but eventually supportive. The ASEAN position will not present major problems to American negotiations.

> While ideally the ASEAN states would rather be free from the influence of either superpower, they acknowledge their dependence on maritime commerce and highly-competetive international markets and accept that

only the United States can counter Soviet aggressiveness at sea.[31]

Of all the regional actors, the reaction of the Soviet and Vietnamese bloc is the easiest to predict. Their reaction will be swift, total condemnation of American imperialist attempts at hegemony over Southeast Asia. Both Soviet and Vietnamese rhetoric will focus on the Thai-US agreement as a threat to the peace of the region, forever preventing the ASEAN dream of ZOPFAN. The Vietnamese reaction to joint Thai-US military exercises has been severe. The Hanoi newspaper, Nhan Dan reported of "Operation Cobra Gold 85",

> The sabre-rattling of the Washington and Bangkok administrations is ill-timed since some countries in the region are advocating dialogue and want to solve all disputes through peaceful means. The U.S.-Thai show of might has only poisoned the already tense atmoshpere in the region.[32]

Both Moscow and Hanoi will denounce a Washington-Bangkok agreement as a real threat to the region. The Soviets will quickly try to focus on any negative Chinese or ASEAN reaction, while empahsizing that their forces in Cam Ranh Bay protect the Vietnamese from imperialist aggression. Soviet disinformation throughout East and Southeast Asia would wage unending war on the US-Thai agreement.

After the October 4, 1985 Memorandum of Understanding was signed by Secretary Weinberger and Prime Minister Prem, Hanoi charged in an editorial that Washington was using an

imagined Vietnamese threat as a pretext to further militarise Thailand; it claimed stores of military equipment and American collusion with China were the real threats to regional peace; and it argued that this pact ran counter to a trend toward peace, stability, and cooperation.[33] The reaction to a US-Thai basing agreement would be even more vocal and venomous. Despite this anticipated reaction, it would have little affect on the success of US-Thai negotiations.

This chapter addressed the problems of negotiations and stressed the importance of a common perception of mutual interests. The chapter is speculative, anticipating the reactions of Thailand and other regional actors to basing initiatives. But if the United States must give up its Philippine facilities, Thailand could be convinced to accept American forces. Thailand must perceive that economic and military benefits outweigh the infringement on its sovereignty. While few of the other regional actors will enthusiastically support a return of American forces to Thailand, they will all tacitly support a US presence in the area. Problems of negotiation can be anticipated, minimized, and overcome. The United States can obtain a bases agreement with Thailand.

Chapter VI Endnotes

[1]Information on the South-East Asia Collective Defence Treaty was taken from Appendix 1 of Collective Defence in Southeast Asia, published by the Royal Institute of International Affairs, Oxford University Press, 1956. See also Jim Wolfe 's excellent article, "Thailand 's security and armed forces,", Janes Defence Weekly, 2 November 1985, pp. 978-986. Wolfe specifically addresses the Rusk-Thanat Communique on p.981.

[2]The report of Sec State Schultz' visit to Bangkok was told by John McBeth in, "Bangkok's High Risk," Far Eastern Economic Review, 8 August 1985, p. 12. A detailed speculation of the purpose of Kissinger's visit is given in the Daily Report: Asia and Pacific, Foreign Broadcast Information Service (FBIS) (National Technical Information Service, Department of Commerce, Springfield, Virginia, 6 December 1985, p. J1), as reported in the Bangkok magazine, Matchon Sut Sapda, on 1 December 1985, pp. 12, 13, 14, 49. (Cited hereafter as FBIS) Asst Sec State Wolfowitz' visit is reported in FBIS (11 December 1985, p. J1) as told in the Bankok Post, 11 December 1985, p. 3. Sitthi's visit to Washington is also reported in FBIS (1 October 1985, p. J1) via the Bangkok Domestic Service broadcast 30 September 1985. Asst Sec Def Armitage's visit is addressed in FBIS (25 February 1985 p. J1, J2) from Bangkok's The Nation Review, 25 February 1985, p. 1.

[3]FBIS (7 October 1985, p. J1) as reported by the Bangkok Domestic Service, 3 October 1985.

[4]See Jim Wolfe's articles, "Thai-US logistics pact to ensure quick resupply", Jane's Defence Weekly, 12 October 1985, p. 765 and "Thailand's security and armed forces," Jane's Defence Weekly, 2 November 1985, p. 981. See also Michael Richardson's article, "Defending South-East Asia,," in Pacific Defence Reporter, February 1985, p. 10, for an earlier Thai suggestion of prepositioned supplies. The logistics memorandum of understanding is also referenced in an unclassified report titled, "Vietnam's Foreign Policy: Alternative Futures," prepared for the Defense Intelligence College, Washington D.C. by the Orkand Corporation, 28 February 1986, pp. 45,46.

[5]FBIS (4 October 1985 p. J1), as reported in Bangkok's The Nation, "US-Thai Logistics Accord Well-Timed," 4 October 1985, p. 4.

[6]FBIS (19 February 1980, p. J2) as reported in the Siam Rat, "Thailand's Correct Stand."

[7]FBIS (14 November 1984, p. J1), as reported in the Siam Rat, 5 November 1984, p. 1, 12.

[8]FBIS (4 June 1985, p. J1, J2), reported in an article by M.R. Sukhumphan Boriphat and Chulaphon Uaraksakum, "Ten Years After the Mayaguez Incident, Past and Future of Thai-U.S. Relations," in Bangkok's Matichon Sut Sapda, 26 May 1985, pp. 18-20.

[9]See the previously referenced FBIS article, "Revival of U.S. Bases--Persuasion From Kissinger," p.12, 13, 14, 49.

[10]See FBIS (18 Mar 1985, p. J7), the Bangkok Siam Rat, reported these comments of permanent Secretary of the Interior Ministry, Phisan Munlasatasthon on 15 March 1985, p. 12.

[11]This was reported by Hans Indorf in "People Power: fallout on Asean neighbors", in Far Eastern Economic Review, 27 March 1986, p. 32.

[12]These statistics are quoted in Wolfe's, "Thailand's security and armed forces, p. 981.

[13] Wolfe, "Thailand's security and armed forces, p. 981.

[14]Statistic taken from a research report by Stephen H. Baker and Ross A. Word, titled "U.S. Military Bases in the Philippines-Strategy, Politics and Contingencies, for the Industrial College of the Armed Forces National Defense University, February 1985, p. 19.

[15]See FBIS (21 June 1985, p. J2), the Bangkok World, article of 20 June 1985, p.3, addresses the student movement. The Students Federation of Thailand has been quite vocal against the government's approval to buy the F-16s. They feel the government show no regard for the people's hardship when choosing to spend $378 million on airplanes. The student movement can be expected to provide the most active opposition to a US presence in Thailand.

[16]Baker and Word, p. 25, they cite the Philippines military plans office as the source of these unvalidated statistics.

[17]See Salvadore P. Lopez' chapter, "The American Bases," in National Security Interests in the Pacific Basin, Claude A. Buss, ed., Hoover Institute Press, Stanford, 1985, pp.226-229.

[18]See David Morrell and Chan-anan's section on the anti-bases student movement of 1976 published in, Political Conflict in Thailand: Reform, Reaction, Revolution, Cambridge, Oelgeschalager, Gran and Ham, Publishers, Inc., 1985, pp. 164-166.

[19]Baker and Word, p.18.

[20]Morrell and Chan-anan, Political Conflict in Thailand, p.165.

[21]See Roy Stewarts article, "Bangkok after Vietnam: The troops are gone but the city has prospered," in the Air Force Times, May 13, 1985, p. T.2.

[22]See introduction to ChapterIV on Southeast Asia in National Security Interests in the Pacific Basin, Claude A. Buss ed., Stanford, Hoover Institution Press, 1985, p. 179.

[23]Stewart, "Bangkok After Vietnam", p. T.2.

[24]"Navy's Presence Less Visible in San Diego," Monterey Peninsula Herald, March 16, 1986, p. 5.

[25]See the article by S. Bilveer, "The U. S. Military Bases in the Philippines," Asian Defence Journal, January 1986, p. 33.

[26]Secretary Armitage's comments from testimony before the House Subcommittee on Asian and Pacific Affairs referenced in U.S. Congress, House, Committee on Foreign Affairs, Subcommittee on Asian and Pacific Affairs, United States - Philippines Relations and the New Base and Aid Agreement, Hearings (Washington: U. S. Government Printing Office, 1983), p. 69.

[27]See Robert Horn's article, "ASEAN-US relations in the 80s," in Asian Defence Journal, June 1984, pp. 22,23.

[28]ASEAN's hopes for non-aligned status are listed in, "Asean, Anzus, FPDA, Zopfan complete NWFZ?", in Far Eastern Economic Review, 7 March 1985.

[29]See Richard K. Betts, "Southeast Asia and U.S. Global Strategy: Continuing Interests and Shifting Priorities," in Orbis, Vol. 29, No. 2, Summer 1985. For similar views of the Indonesian and Malaysian fears of the Chinese see also Col. C. M. Noor Arshad's article, "The Implications of Soviet-Vietnamese Relations," in Asian Defence Journal, January 1986, p. 38.

[30]Lee Kuan Yew's statement was reported in the article, "U.S. reportedly considering Singapore for base sites," in the Honolulu Advertiser. The article was provided to the author as a "zerox" copy in answer to a letter to CINCPAC headquarters requesting information on alternative basing initiatives, therefore no date or page number is provided for the article.

[31]See Dora Alves', "A strategy for the Indian and Pacific oceans,", Pacific Defence Reporter, October 1983, p. 12.

[32]As reported in FBIS (3 July 1985, p. K1) for a report of an article in Hanoi's Nhan Dan newspaper on 3 July 1985.

[33]As reported in the Indochina news section of the Asian Defence Journal under the title, "Vietnam Denounces Signing of U.S. - Thai Military Pact," December 1985, p. 167.

VIII. Conclusion

This paper examines one critical question. If the United States must leave its facilities in the Philippines can we use Thailand as an alternate? The framework for analysis covered six separate but interlocking subjects: American interests in Southeast Asia; overcoming the Vietnam trauma; the history of US-Thai relations; the Soviet-Vietnamese threat to the region and its affect on US-Thai relations; and finally, the politics of negotiations for US basing rights in Thailand.

The reader was first lead to a discussion of the importance of Southeast Asia to American interests. The region commands attention as a growing economic power, a source of strategic raw materials, and as a critical linkage, via sealines of communication between petroleum rich Southwest Asia and industrialized East Asia. The free nations of Southeast Asia, collectively known as the Association of Southeast Asian nations (ASEAN), comprise a growing economic force. American trade with ASEAN has more than doubled in the past ten years and shows every indication of continued rapid growth. America's Asia-Pacific trade greatly exceeds its trade with Europe. Although European interests remain foremost in American priorities, its interests must eventually shift to Asia.

Southeast Asia is a key source of strategic raw materials and minerals: rubber, tin, titanium, chromium, and platinum. Additionally, off-shore oil deposits in the South China Sea have established the ASEAN nations as a key source of oil for the industrialized countries of East Asia. It is in the American national interest to guarantee access for free nations to these important resources.

Military planners often justify the importance of an otherwise insignificant area by extollinging its value as a link between two vital regions. While Southeast Asia is important in its own right, it also sits astride the key straits that link oil-rich Southwest Asia and industrialized Northeast Asia. Over 60% of the petroleum used by the East Asian economic dynamo flows through the Indian Ocean and the straits of Makassar, Sunda, Lombok, and Malacca. An American presence in Southeast Asia is required to protect these vital sealines of communication.

The focus of the paper shifted to the trauma of Vietnam to answer the question, "Is America over its Vietnam trauma?" The consensus is unclear, but several factors infer American public support for a strong American presence in the region: US basing is not the same as committing American troops to land combat; public interest in the Philippine election crisis indicates the basing issue concerns many Americans; the massive conservative support in the election and landslide reelection of

President Reagan; and finally, US public support of military actions in the Middle East and Grenada. The solid public reaction to our Libyan reprisal even prompted NBC's Tom Brokaw to ask, "Is America over the trauma of Vietnam?"[1] The chapter concludes that public opinion over future US-Thai basing agreements is far more likely to be concerned with budget considerations than the anti-military Vietnam legacy.

Next, the paper reviewed US-Thai relations. Two points emerged from the two countries' interactions: a general friendship between the benevolent patron, the United States, and an appreciative client, Thailand; and a strong tendency for both nations to protect their own vital interests as they perceive them. Although the US-Thai relationship has had peaks and valleys, the two peoples have a warm regard for each other. While Thailand has often been willing to rely on US aid and assistance, it has not hesitated to disassociate itself from American policy when it felt Thai interests were better served elsewhere. A history of the two countries emphasizes that future US initiatives to Thailand must stress mutual interests.

The paper analyzed the Soviet Union's involvement in Southeast Asia and its affect on US-Thai security interests. Since the American withdrawal from Southeast Asia, the Soviets have provided massive military and economic assistance to the Socialist Republic of Vietnam.

In return, the Soviets secured basing rights at the former US bases of Danang and Cam Ranh Bay. At any one time, some 30 Soviet fighter, reconnaissance, and strike aircraft, and a like number of surface naval combatants and attack submarines are stationed at these bases, threatening all the regional capitals and critical straits.

Thailand's post-Vietnam strategy emphasized neutrality and accommodation with all regional actors. But Vietnamese occupation of Kampuchea and armed incursions across the Thai border forced Bangkok to abandon its balanced foreign policy and seek protection from China and the United States. Vietnamese aggression and the Soviet presence in the region galvanized the resistance of Thailand, China and ASEAN. Soviet actions in Indochina caused the national security interests of Thailand and the United States to converge. Washington wants to counter the Soviet military presence and prevent a Vietnamese invasion of Thailand. Bangkok needs American military arms and assistance to guarantee its survival.

There followed a comparison of the facilities and missions of American bases in the Philippines and the capabilities of present assets in Thailand. The Philippine bases offer an invaluable combination of anchorages, maintenace facilities, supply depots, and training ranges which contribute to a variety of missions. But a limited forward-based US presence in Thailand would show American

resolve and commitment to the free nations of Southeast Asia.

Four areas in Thailand could be used for an American base: Bangkok/Don Muang, Sattahip/U-Taphao, Songkhla/Hat Yai, and Phuket/Phang Nga. While the Phuket region offers key advantages in location and force projection, it would require substantial investment to be an adequate base. The Sattahip/U-Taphao complex would provide an adequate, minimum cost basing option.

Successful negotiation for US basing rights in Thailand must stress mutuality of interests. The United States must anticipate that Thailand will be unenthusiastic over American basing initiatives, and quickly point out that an American military presence is a logical extension of the recent military cooperation between the two countries. An American facility in Thailand aids Thailand as a weapons stockpile, as logistics center for rapid wartime resupply, and as a deterrent against Vietnamese invasion. Thailand benefits from increased aid or "rent money", increased employment, and the domestic trickle down of "GI" dollars. American negotiators must counter potential Thai anti-bases arguments, by stressing that through a low key presence, use of remote locations, and restricted "R&R" visits to Bangkok we can minimize the negative affect on Thai sovereignty, nuclear strike vulnerability, and the negative influence of "GIs" on Thai society.

In the absence of a US presence in the Philippines, the Thais will grudingly acquiesce to a limited American presence in their country. American basing initiatives will be quietly and tacitly supported by China as a counter to the Soviet Union's regional presence. The ASEAN nations will reluctantly postpone their dream of a non-aligned region to have an American counter to Soviet and Chinese influence.

If the United States is forced to give up its Philippine facilities, we can expect to successfully negotiate limited low key basing rights in Thailand by stressing mutuality of interests. The American public can recognize the importance of Southeast Asia and our historical friendship with Thailand. Public opinion will support rebasing of naval and air force units in Thailand as a counter to Soviet and Vietnamese presence in the region. The US could use Thailand as a forward basing alternative to the Philippines.

Chapter VII Endnotes

[1]Tom Brokaw, paraphrased on NBC's Nigthly News, 14 April 1986.

APPENDIX
RUSK-THANAT AGREEMENT

The Thanat-Rusk Agreement of March 1962 ended a period of strained relations between the United States and Thailand. American military support for Thailand's traditional enemy Cambodia, United States ambivalence toward Laos, and SEATO's refusal to come to Laos' assistance against the Communist threat had been particularly divisive problems. The agreement and the subsequent dispatch of American soldiers to northeast Thailand once again improved Thai-American relations. The joint statement altered significantly the original intent of the SEATO treaty which called for "unanimous agreement" among the member states before action could be taken against "the common danger." In the 1962 statement the United States agreed to defend Thailand without the prior agreement of the SEATO nations. The Thai reaction to the Thanat-Rusk Agreement was enthusiastic. Prime Minister Sarit hailed the American pledge in a special television report to the people. Thanat Khoman, Thailand's minister of foreign affairs, in his statement to the SEATO Council of Ministers pointed out that the SEATO alliance was no longer the basis of Thailand's defense policies. The disinterest of SEATO nations such as Great Britain, France, and Pakistan could no longer preclude unilateral American action in defense of Thailand against Communist aggression.

The Thanat Khoman-Dean Rusk Agreement [March 6, 1962]

The Foreign Minister of Thailand, Thanat Khoman, and the Secretary of State Dean Rusk met on several occasions during the past few days for discussions on the current situation in Southeast Asia, the Southeast Asia Collective Defence Treaty and the security of Thailand.

The Secretary of State reaffirmed that the United States regards the preservation of the independence and integrity of Thailand as vital to the national interest of the United States and to world peace. He expressed the firm intention of the United States to aid Thailand, its ally and historic friend, in resisting Communist aggression and subversion.

The Foreign Minister and the Secretary of State reviewed the close association of Thailand and the United States in the Southeast Asia Collective Defence Treaty and agreed that such association is an effective deterrent to direct Communist aggression against Thailand. They agreed that the treaty provides the basis for the signatories collectively to assist Thailand in case of Communist armed attack against that country. The Secretary of State

assured the Foreign Minister that in the event of such aggression, the United States intends to give full effect to its obligations under the treaty to act to meet the common danger in accordance with its constitutional processes. The Secretary of State reaffirmed that this obligation of the United States does not depend upon the prior agreement of all other parties to the treaty, since this treaty obligation is individual as well as collective.

In reviewing measures to meet indirect aggression, the Secretary of State stated that the United States regards its commitments to Thailand under the Southeast Asia Collective Defence Treaty and under its bilateral economic and military assistance agreements with Thailand as providing an important basis for United States actions to help Thailand meet indirect aggression. In this connection the Secretary reviewed with the Foreign Minister the actions being taken by the United States to assist the Republic of Vietnam to meet the threat of indirect aggression.

The Foreign Minister assureD the Secretary of State of the determination of the government of Thailand to meet this threat of indirect aggression by pursuing vigorously measures for the economic and social welfare and the safety of its people.

The situation in Laos was reviewed in detail and full agreement ws reached on the necessity for the stability of Southeast Asia of achieving a free, independent and truly neutral Laos.

The Foreign Minister and the Secretary of State reviewed the mutaul efforts of their governments to increase the capabilities and readiness of the Thai armed forces to defend the Kingdom. They noted also that the United States is making a significant contribution to this effort and that the United States intends to accelerate future deliveries to the greatest extent possible. The Secretary and Foreign Minister also took note of the work of the joint Thai-United States committee which has been extablished in Bangkok to assure effective cooperation in social, economic and military measures to increase Thailand's national capabilities. They agreed that this joint committee and its sub-committees should continue to work towards the most effective utilization of Thailand's resources and thsoe provided by the United States to promote Thailand's development and security. The Foreign Minister and the Secretary were in full agreement that continued economic and social progress is essential to the stability of Thailand. They reciewed Thailand's impressive economic and social progress and the Thai government's plans to accelerate development, particularly Thailand's continuing determination fully to utilize its own resources in moving towards its development goals.

The Foreign Minister and the Secretary of State also discussed the desirability of an early conclusion of a treaty of friendship, commerce and navigation between the two countries which would bring into accord with current conditions the existing treaty of 1937.[1]

Smith, Roger M. ed. Southeast Asia Documents of Political Development and Change. Cornell University Press, Ithaca and London. 1974. pp. 74-75.

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